

L. E. Bridgeman

WOMAN AS SHE SHOULD BE;

OR,

MEMOIRS OF

MRS. MENVILLE.

WOMAN AS SHE SHOULD BE

MEMOIRS OF

MRS. MENVILLE



WOMAN AS SHE SHOULD BE;

O R,

MEMOIRS OF

MRS. MENVILLE,

A NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY MRS. PARSONS,

AUTHOR OF ERRORS OF EDUCATION, MISS MEREDITH,
AND INTRIGUES OF A MORNING.

V O L. II.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR WILLIAM LANE,

AT THE

Printer's,

LEADENHALL-STREET,

AND SOLD BY E. HARLOW, PALL-MALL;

M DCC XCIII.

WOMAN AS SHE SHOULD BE

MEMOIRS OF

MRS. MENVILLE

A NOVEL

IN FOUR VOLUMES

BY MRS. PARSONS

AUTHOR OF ERRORS OF EDUCATION, MISS WREDDITH,
AND INTRIGUES OF A MORNING.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR WILLIAM LANE,

AT THE

STATIONERS,

15, ADAM STREET,

AND SOLD BY E. HARRISON, PAUL-FALL.



W O M A N

AS SHE

SHOULD BE.

LETTER I.

MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. BERTIE.

I AM very low spirited, my dear friend.
Chide me not, for indeed I am not happy: yet I expect the felicity of seeing my dearest father to-morrow, in consequence of Harry's letter to him. Whether he will

VOL. II.

B

approve

approve of the India Voyage, I know not; but I am persuaded he will be grieved and disappointed at my uncle's conduct. Yesterday morning I drove to his house, whilst Miss Ellis and Miss Shepherd went a-shopping. He received me with evident confusion and embarrassment, entered into the great views he had for my brother, if he coincided with his wishes, congratulated *himself* on the grandeur and *happiness* I enjoyed, and, in short, hurried from one subject to another, evidently to avoid any particular conversation. No mention was made of the farmer's daughter; and I neither expressed pleasure nor dissatisfaction at this scheme for Harry: consequently we parted on good terms.

On my return home, I found Miss Ellis and Mr. Colemore alone in the drawing-room. Judging from their appearance some interesting conversation had taken place, I was about to withdraw, when she entreated my return, saying, "Mrs. Menville, Sir, is the



the friend of my heart: my greatest pride is to merit her esteem: on her judgment, I am sure, I can rest with confidence; and therefore you will oblige me in making known to her every thing which has just now occurred. I think myself honoured by your partiality; but my friend and parents must sanction your pretensions before I can give them any countenance.

She left the room; and Mr. Colemore, without hesitation, avowed his admiration of Miss Ellis, and the offer he had presumed to make of his heart and hand, if she had no particular attachment to another.

It instantly darted into my mind the letter I had accidentally seen of Captain Harley's, and her obvious confusion when I entered the room. Under the uncertain conjectures I entertained, I could only reply to Mr. Colemore, "that I was persuaded Miss Ellis had a just sense of his merit, and that I highly respected him, both on his own account, and

the proof he had given of his discernment in selecting my friend; that I was persuaded Miss Ellis was above keeping any gentleman in suspense, and doubtless would either herself, or through me, inform him of her sentiments."

He besought my interest, and left me much impressed in his favour. I went up to Miss Ellis's dressing-room, and found her in a thoughtful posture. She arose on my entrance; but, seating myself by her, I said, "I have been applied to by Mr. Colemore for *my* interest; but, highly as I think of that gentleman, *you* must authorize me, before I undertake a commission of that importance."

"My dear Mrs. Menville," answered she, "I have no objection to Mr. Colemore's person or manners; his fortune is superior to my expectations; his character is in his favour; I have long beheld him with esteem; but —"

She

She stopt. I thought of the letter.

"But what, my dear girl? From whence arises your hesitation? Have you any preference for another?"

"No," replied she, with vivacity, "I have not; but in short I see and hear of such wonderful changes in the minds of men; I have seen the most ardent lover of one of the most perfect of her sex, in a short time, behave with indifference and neglect; I have heard of so much instability in the affections of men, that I tremble at the idea of a coldness my temper and fortitude would be very unequal to support. And why should I, with such small pretensions to merit, expect to meet with a husband superior in fidelity and attention to his wife, which those of real and exalted worth often fail in obtaining, and without which I must be miserable?"

"If your objections to Mr. Colemore spring from no other source," I replied, "I

think a little reflection will do *them* away. He has lived long in town without any impeachment on his character; his education and sentiments were formed on a different plan from men of the world; he has fallen into no dissipations; his fortune is unimpaired; and he could not give a stronger proof of his judgment and integrity of heart, than in selecting a woman of merit from the gaudy butterflies which are perpetually playing round men, to attract their notice."

She smiled at my last words, which I believe I spoke *rather warmly*.

"Well," said she, "let Mr. Colemore then make his sentiments known to my father and mother; and if, on a proper investigation of his character, they approve of his addresses, I will honestly own to you, my dear Mrs. Menville, it will give me satisfaction to make him happy."

"I was

I was delighted with her determination: but a little curiosity concerning my former conjectures recurring, after some hesitation, "Pray, my dear," asked I, "do *you* correspond with Captain Harley?"

She blushed exceedingly; but presently replied with great frankness, "*I do*, entirely at the request of my father, who, having a sincere regard for the Captain, and yet incapable of being a punctual correspondent, begged his acceptance of my pen, instead of his own more valuable one. I have had some letters from him, which have given me both pain and pleasure. I wished often to mention them to you, but was at a loss how to act; yet, as the subject is now begun by yourself, will you permit me to communicate them to you?"

"No, my love," said I, "by no means. I wish Captain Harley extremely well; he has my most perfect esteem: but ever since I became the wife of Mr. Menville, it was

both my duty and inclination to forget him. At present I could read his letters with the utmost indifference; but I conceive it a respect I owe to Mr. Menville and myself, not to think of him but as an entire stranger; therefore, though a little female curiosity prompted me to ask the question, it was on your account only, and the subject will never be renewed by me."

I retired to dress, happy in the agreeable prospects of this worthy girl, and the delight it would give her revered parents to see her settled with a man so unexceptionable as Mr. Colemore. At dinner, Mr. Menville told me two ladies intended paying their compliments to me that morning, and delivered me a card, to which I must make a return next day, it having been given to him during my absence. The card run thus:

LADY HARTWILL AND MRS. BLOOMFIELD,
GROSVENOR-SQUARE.

"Are

"Are you intimate with those ladies?" I demanded.

"Very slightly," replied he; "but meeting them the other day in company with a gentleman of my acquaintance, but who I had not seen since my marriage, he congratulated me, of course, and the ladies told me they would do themselves the honour to knock at your door. They are women of fashion and character; and you will return the visit to-morrow, or the following day at farthest."

"May I flatter myself that you will accompany me?" I asked; "otherwise it will be extremely awkward, should I be let in."

"I will certainly attend you," he replied.

"How frightful," cried Miss Shepherd, "to run about visiting people one does not know nor care for! I thought Mrs. Menville was not fond of company."

"Not particularly so, Miss Shepherd; but I shall always rejoice in the society of *worthy* people; for, though I hate a crowd, I like a select party; and I own I have felt a little mortified that hitherto our visitors have been confined to one sex only."

"Well," said she, "I am sure there is more pleasure in their society than in a party of censorious young women, or old dowagers."

"I made no reply, and the conversation became general.—In the evening we sat down to cards: I was placed at the whist-table with Mr. Colemore, a Mr. Anderson, and Mr. Martin: the latter was my partner. His attentions, a hundred impertinent allusions which he made on our situation, his odious looks, in short, his whole behaviour was calculated to give me pain; and I observed, once or twice, Mr. Colemore viewed him with indignation. I played with so much confusion and ill-humour, that we
lost

lost the rubber; and I arose to give place to Mr. Thurkill, who had cut out from the other table. I excused myself from playing again, and chose to amuse myself with looking on. "Standers-by see most of the game." My observations were not pleasing ones. I turned from a scene most poignant to my feelings, and intended leaving the room; but, whether from the heat, sitting so long, or from some other cause, I know not, but before I got to the door, my head grew giddy, I uttered a faint scream, and had not that odious Martin flown to support me, must have fallen to the ground. I lost my senses for a few moments: recovering, I found myself still supported by Martin, Miss Ellis on her knees, applying salts, and the company crowded round me. Mr. Menville was standing near me; taking my hand, "How do you find yourself, Emily? Pray, my dear, let your woman attend you to your bed."

I told him I was better, but would take his advice. Having apologized to the company, I was led out of the room, but not before that daring fellow presumed to press my hand, and sigh most deplorably. Mr. Menville came to bed very late: his *words* were kind, but the manner, alas! my dear Mrs. Bertie, his voice was chilling and indifferent. When in company he treats me with politeness; but when alone, with a gravity in his air that sometimes wounds my very soul. Ah! my dear friend, riches and splendor alone will not gratify the feelings of a delicate and susceptible mind; they cannot confer happiness; they cannot procure peace to that bosom which sighs for domestic enjoyments! Ever since I became the wife of Mr. Menville, the study of my life has been to please him; but a stronger influence than mine counteracts all my efforts. I can no longer conceal from you what is but too obvious to all our visitors. Miss Shepherd entirely possesses that
heart

heart I once thought solely mine; gay, volatile, and coquetish. She has caught the attention of Mr. Menville, and I have no longer the power to charm: I fear he even regrets the hour he gave his hand to me. My dear father! never shall you know my disappointment and sorrow; to you I will appear happy, nor rend your bosom with the knowledge how much I sacrifice to appearances. You only, my beloved friend, shall know the secrets of my heart. Do you instruct me in the arts of pleasing; tell me what I must do to regain lost affection; teach me the happy art of becoming ever new and desirable in the eyes of my husband; 'tis all the felicity this world can bestow. I am not romantic; I do not expect adoration or rapture. Oh! no: *all* I ask, *all* I wish, is that perfect esteem, that reasonable passion, which promotes mutual happiness; and without which a married life must be a wretched one. Yet I will not give way to melancholy reflections: I will strictly endeavour to perform

form my duties, and leave the rest to Providence.

I am now waiting for Mr. Menville to conduct me to Grosvenor-Square; an awkward visit: yet I really wish for the society of some rational females. Mr. Menville proposes giving a route and supper a fortnight hence, and talks of sending out cards to-morrow. I made no objection, though I think it likely I shall be confined before that period.

I am just returned from Lady Hartwill's, most exceedingly delighted with my visit. The ladies were at home. On my entrance, her Ladyship took my hand, "I am highly gratified, my dear Mrs. Menville, by this early compliment. You find me prepared to love and respect you. The name and merits of Miss Oswald I have long been acquainted with."

She

She then introduced me to her sister, Mrs. Bloomfield, who received me with equal politeness. These ladies are both widows of large independent fortunes; and from an affection and friendship not often met with, chuse to reside together.—Mrs. Bloomfield is about forty, elegant in her person, but not handsome, gentle in her manners, and unassuming. Lady Hartwill is three years younger; her person not so genteel as her sister's, but a lovely face: in every feature you may trace vivacity, happily blended with sweetness, and a wish to please. The frankness of her manners, with the most interesting countenance I ever beheld, inspire you with love and confidence the moment she addresses you.

“Two summers ago,” said her Ladyship, “I was on a visit in the neighbourhood of Sudbury, where I heard the amiable Miss Oswald the theme of universal admiration; and every family I visited regretted that the very retired disposition of Mr. Oswald precluded

cluded them the happiness of being intimate with his charming daughter. About a week since, when I came to town, I heard, among other news, Mr. Menville was married to Miss Oswald. I longed to pay my compliments; and was casting about on the propriety of my visit, when luckily we met Mr. Menville; and, through the medium of a friend with us, I conveyed my intention of waiting on you."

"Bless me!" cried out Mrs. Bloomfield, "what a long preface, sister! You oppress Mrs. Menville with a tedious speech, whilst I hope my eyes speak for me, and say how happy I am to see her."

"You do indeed oppress me, ladies; for I am unable to make any return to so much polite kindness. I feel myself greatly honoured by an approbation I must *study* to deserve; for at present, new to the world, almost a stranger to its inhabitants, unacquainted with fashionable manners, I am
sensible

fensible of my own deficiencies, and must encroach on goodness like yours to supply them."

"Upon my word, ladies," said Mr. Menville, "you will leave nothing for me to say, you pay such pretty compliments to each other, that they must entirely distance such poor fellows as I am."

"Why, indeed," replied her Ladyship, "at our time of life we have no chance of exciting admiration; and compliments which we are conscious of not deserving, must depress, rather than raise vanity."

"You now, indeed," answered he, smiling, "prevent me from saying a word; but you must permit me to *think*, ladies, nor can you render me *blind*, though you oblige me to be dumb."

I was so very much delighted with the attentions of the two ladies, that, although I arose twice to take my leave, I was easily per-

persuaded to resume my seat, and I did not leave them until it was near time to dress for dinner.

“ Promise me, my dear Mrs. Menville, you will indulge my wish of being on the most intimate footing with you,” said Lady Hartwill. “ I am indeed old enough to be your mother, but consider me as an elder sister, equally attached to you by blood as affection.”

“ Such violent friendships at first sight,” cried Mr. Menville, “ would be considered by men in general, to be of short duration; and ladies are seldom believed to feel any real partiality for each other.”

“ But pray consider, Mr. Menville, your Lady had my most perfect esteem before I had the honour of knowing her; and now I am happy to have inclination confirmed by judgment.”

I bowed

I bowed in silence to a compliment I shall be most anxious to deserve.—When we returned, I could not help priding myself a little on the distinguished honour which the notice of those ladies conferred on me, for I had equal attention shewn me by Mrs. Bloomfield; but 'tis impossible to repeat all our conversation. I thought, at dinner, Mr. Menville eyed me with kindness, Miss Shepherd with envy and malignity. I was however in an uncommon flow of spirits, which Miss Ellis and Mr. Colemore greatly encouraged, and I readily joined in a party proposed to Drury-Lane. I am now just ready to join the company, having written by bits and scraps, as I could find time: my mind rather a little more easy than when I began this letter. I hourly expect to hear from you. Believe me ever

your's sincerely

E. MENVILLE.

I shall write again to-morrow.

LETTER

LETTER II.

MRS. MENVILLE IN CONTINUATION.

I FINISHED my letter last night, when I was just setting off for Drury-Lane; at the house we were joined by Martin and Thurkill (the latter a constant attendant on Miss Shepherd) and in the only box we could procure seats were Lord Longfield and two gentlemen who had taken the front row; on our entrance they rose up, and insisted very politely we should take their places; as I conceived they were earnest in their civilities, and hate a bustle in a public place, I accepted

ed the offer without hesitation, only making a slight acknowledgment; our gentlemen would not take the second row, consequently Lord Longfield and his party were behind us, and payed us every attention which politeness could warrant. When the play was ended, Lord Longfield took my hand to conduct me out; at the back of the box were the gentlemen of our party; Martin hastily advanced,

“ Mrs. Menville, will you permit me to conduct you to your carriage?”

“ Pardon me, sir,” said his Lordship,
“ I have already the honour of Mrs. Menville’s hand, and will attend her to her carriage myself.”

Martin drew back, with fury and vexation in his countenance; we were soon placed in the carriage, and to my inexpressible surprise, Mr. Menville, when his Lordship was taking leave, said, “ he should be glad of the honour
5 of

of thanking Lord Longfield for his civilities, in Bedford-Square." My Lord bowed, and replied, "he would soon profit by so obliging an invitation."

I was all astonishment; the compliment those gentlemen had payed us was a very common one, in a public place, and Mr. Menville's knowledge of his Lordship was so very slight, as scarcely to warrant such a return. I was not indeed displeased, though surprised, as except Mr. Colemore, I do not like one of our male visitors.

Martin was gloomy and unfociable at supper; Thurkill taken up with his attentions to Miss Shepherd; Mr. Colemore and Miss Ellis wore an air of visible constraint; in short, for once Mr. Menville and myself were the only unembarrassed persons present; a party so little pleased with each other, you may suppose, separated at an early hour. This morning Mr. Colemore payed me a visit in my dressing-room, and I rejoiced him

6 with

with permission from Miss Ellis, to address her parents; I never saw a man more delighted; he hastened from me to write; as I have little doubt of the Doctor's approbation of an offer so advantageous, I feel much delight in the prospect of their approaching union. I now hourly expect my father; Harry dines with us to meet him; my uncle was invited, but he pleaded business, though I doubt his real objection was to avoid the angry eye of my father; conscious he has not acted right. Harry is come, adieu my dear.

The family party, all except my father and myself, are gone to Aftley's; I believe they supposed we might wish to be alone after so long an absence, and they judged rightly. My father arrived before the dinner hour; our meeting was truly tender and affectionate; he pressed me in his arms, "Let me enfold my darling, and I hope happy daughter," said he, with anxious looks.

"Yes,

“ Yes, my dearest father, your child is happy, doubly so in seeing you;” but ah! my dear Mrs. Bertie, my beloved parent is much altered in those few months I have been from him; he looks pale and emaciated in the face, whilst a dropsical habit seems to gain ground on his body; his legs are swelled, his breath short, and indeed he appears very unwell; my tears would fall, but I imputed them to joy; he viewed the house, the furniture and equipage, with evident satisfaction—showy trifles alas! how insufficient to produce content! yet *he* thought otherwise, heaven grant he may never be deceived. As I expected, he is much exasperated with my uncle, and at first appeared very unwilling to consent that his son should go to India, but Harry expressed his inclination so strongly, that at last he wrung from him a reluctant acquiescence. A younger brother of my mother’s was in the company’s service, but being taken a prisoner eight years ago, from that period he has never been heard of; whether dead or alive we
know

know not, but most likely the former. The uncertainty of his fate gave my poor mother inexpressible uneasiness, but she was at length persuaded to believe him dead, and grew more resigned. My father mentioned the circumstances which befel him to Harry.

“ If you do go to India, my dear son, endeavour, if possible, to obtain some traces of your uncle’s fate,” poor Harry Seymour can scarcely remember me, as he left England within three months after my marriage; but he was your mother’s darling brother; heaven knows what his fate may be, yet it will be some satisfaction to know when and how he died. As you go out in a civil employ, the dangers he experienced, I hope you will never encounter, and if we ever meet again, heaven grant I may embrace a son, both virtuous and happy. I felt my spirits so much affected, that I left those dear relatives together, and having given ease to my full heart by a flood of tears, and written thus far, I now return to the drawing-room.

The party from Astley's came home in high spirits, every one looked happy. Mr. Menville payed the most marked attention to my father, which pleased him, and highly gratified me. This morning my father is gone to call on my uncle, and settle things for my brother's voyage, which takes place in less than a fortnight; dear fellow! may heaven preserve him from every trouble and disaster! Mr. Menville is busy making out cards for his entertainment, assisted by Thurkill and Martin, who almost live here, I think. I wish not for a circle so enlarged, for I like not dissipation nor a croud; a very few men and women of character and polished manners, is the society calculated to give pleasure and improvement: but Mr. Menville has a right to please himself, he loves company, and a great number of his acquaintance are now come to town, and have left cards, "Lady Hartwill and her sister in the drawing-room," I fly to them.

My

My charming visitants have just left me, more and more delighted with the friendship they offered me. I introduced Miss Ellis and Miss Shepherd to the ladies, they were politely received; her ladyship told Miss Ellis, she respected the character of Doctor Ellis, and was happy to see his daughter. She then invited us in a familiar friendly way, to spend the following day with them, *en famille*, said she, for I will let in no others, that I may enjoy your company without interruption. We accepted the invitation with pleasure. Pray bring Mr. Menville, your father and brother, said Mrs. Bloomfield, we shall have no other beaux; permit me then to send down for Mr. Menville, and enquire into his engagements.

“That’s rightly thought of,” said her ladyship, “those impertinent men are always forming plans for their own amusement; there’s no answering for them.”

"Oh," cried Miss Shepherd, "*I think I can answer* for Mr. Menville to-morrow."

"Indeed, madam," replied her ladyship, in an accent of surprise, and a scrutinizing look, "you have the honour then of being in his confidence I presume?"

Miss Shepherd, with all her effrontery, blushed, but before she could answer, Mr. Menville entered, introducing Lord Longfield. His Lordship knowing the elegant sisters, after paying his compliments to me with the highest respect, advanced to them.

"Upon my honour," said Lady Hartwill, "few things could give me greater pleasure than seeing your Lordship in town; you know you were always a violent favourite of mine, and I feel half inclined, if these lady's will permit me, to break through a resolution just now made, and invite you to eat your mutton at my house to-morrow, with a family party."

"I hope

"I hope these ladies," answered he, bowing to us, "will not have the cruelty to forbid the indulgence you seem inclined to honour me with."

"I have no objection," said Mrs. Bloomfield, "if Mrs. Menville has none."

"I never can feel any, madam, I replied, to a wish of Lady Hartwill's and your's."

"Objection!" cried Miss Shepherd, rudely interrupting me, "bless me, I think his Lordship's company will be a great acquisition."

"You are very polite, madam," said he bowing gravely to her, "and the ladies do me great honour."

"But pray," exclaimed Mr. Menville, "may I be permitted to ask, what this party is, in which the ladies of *my* family seem included, and whether the *resolution*,

which, like most female ones, will be easily rescinded, cannot add me to the number."

"Help me, dear ladies," cried Lady Hartwill, "to punish this man for his impertinent remark, I do assure you," added she, smiling; "had you not been an exemption from the resolution before it was formed, you should have rued the day when you dared to ridicule our instability: but to be short, these ladies do me the favour of dining with me to-morrow; Mr. Oswald, his son, and you, sir, were included in the invitation; *that* young lady," bowing to Miss Shepherd, "has been so kind as to answer for your being disengaged; what say *you*, sir?"

"That young lady, madam, was very sensible I could no where find equal pleasure to that of waiting on your ladyship, and therefore rightly judged I *would* not be engaged."

"Very

"Very well hit off," said Mrs. Bloomfield, smiling, and rising up, "you forget sister, the important business of calling at your milliner's."

"True," answered her ladyship, but a small time is sufficient to sacrifice to vanity; however, we have intruded on Mrs. Menville's hour for dress, I believe, therefore I am ready to attend you; remember I expect you all very early to-morrow; as an old-fashioned woman, I dine at five o'clock."

"Ah!" cried Mr. Menville, "how mortified you would be if we took your old-fashioned woman upon trust, without looking in your face."

"Not I, indeed," answered she, gaily, "my youthful days are over, and to be even with you, I will honestly confess, I once thought myself wonderfully handsome; a hundred idle fellows who followed my train, confirmed the idea; every one must die if I

favoured another, and when at last, at my father's request, I gave my hand to Lord Hartwill, I expected the most dismal tragedies, and dying lovers complaints, from every quarter. Alas! no such things happened, my quondam swains consoled themselves with other pursuits, and many of those, who two months before, could not live without me, I met paying devoirs to other women before my face; so, in short, I began to think a little more humbly of myself; every day's experience gave a blow to my self-love, and as my principles would not permit me to receive the idle attentions of profligates, I grew wiser and better every day; and now gentlefolks, at the matron-like age of eight and thirty, you behold me a reasonable woman, without expectations or vanity, and determined to make my life comfortable, by the enjoyment of a select and pleasing society. So here ends my eventful history, and now, sister, I am at your service."

She

She accepted Mr. Menville's hand; Lord Longfield offered his to Mrs. Bloomfield, and having conducted the ladies to their carriage, they returned.

"What a charming woman Lady Hartwill is," said Mr. Menville.

"She really is a *valuable* woman," added Lord Longfield, "and her conduct in a marriage life with an elderly man, and her subsequent behaviour, has stamped her a respectable character."

"I like *her* well enough," said Miss Shepherd, in a careless way, "but her sister is a mere piece of still life, without animation."

"Yet Mrs. Bloomfield is certainly very amiable," replied Lord Longfield, "she has not the wit and vivacity of Lady Hartwill indeed, but she has sense and sensibility."

His Lordship then turning to me, entered into general subjects, and after staying about a quarter of an hour, took leave of us, receiving a general invitation from Mr. Menville, to visit us on a friendly footing, which was accepted with pleasure.

I had just finished dressing when my father came into the room; I dismissed my woman, as I saw by his countenance he was desirous of speaking to me.

“ I have seen Mr. Seymour, he has procured a good situation for your brother, with very strong recommendations; he gives him a thousand pounds to trade with; your generous husband,” added he, “ made Harry a present this morning, of two hundred pound bank notes, to equip himself decently; I hope, therefore, since my boy wishes to go, he will not embark without such advantages as may promise him success. Your uncle appeared so conscious and embarrassed, that I felt myself
unable

unable to upbraid him, and in short, we parted very good friends."

"I rejoice to hear it, my dear sir," I replied, "but pray how does my brother Anthony go on; he never writes me?"

"So, so, answered my father; he is a little too extravagant, but he has an offer of going abroad in the summer, with a young Nobleman, without being at any expence to himself."

"In what view then is he to appear?" I asked.

"Entirely as a friend and companion, but I have acceded to the proposition conditionally, only that he pays his own travelling expences; as to the article of *table* expences, I shall not contend about the matter, because the whole expenditure would be more than I can afford. But pray my dear Emily, why do you keep this Miss Shepherd here?"

I told my father how things were situated, he shook his head, "They are all artful people, I wish her out of your house, and I fear Mr. Menville will repent placing his affairs in the hands of old Shepherd." A summons to dinner broke off this conversation.

When we retired to the drawing-room, I thought there was something very particular in Miss Shepherd's looks, at last addressing Miss Ellis,

"I understand, madam, Mr. Colemore has asked permission to address you, and that we shall soon have a wedding."

"I sincerely wish it may be so," answered I, seeing my friend a little confused.

"Well," resumed miss, "it will be a little singular, should you marry both your visitors off."

"Indeed

“ Indeed it would give me much pleasure, Miss Shepherd, if for your advantage.”

“ Why then,” said she, “ though Miss Ellis has been *so very reserved*, I shall make no scruple to tell you, that wretch Thurkill has teased me out of my consent, for him to apply to my father. Pray tell me, Mrs. Menville, what you think of him?”

“ Indeed, Miss Shepherd, I know so little of Mr. Thurkill, that I do not think myself qualified to give an opinion.”

“ Nor,” added I, smiling, “ can it be of any consequence to you, when you have made up your mind, previous to asking it.”

“ Mr. Menville speaks well of him,” said she, “ he is not a Nabob indeed, *every one has not* the good fortune to meet with such, he has twelve hundred a year however, and my father can give *me* something, I suppose;

I suppose ; so we may make shift to live decently, though not with splendor."

The peevish tone of her voice, and impertinent manner, gave me a momentary displeasure ; I suppressed my feelings however, and only replied, " Splendor is not absolutely necessary to happiness, and I hope a genteel competency, with a man of your choice, will prove it to you."

She arose, and muttering some words to herself, quitted the room, leaving Miss Ellis and myself equally astonished by her communication and manner of behaviour.

I have this instant your last letter brought me ; the contents have delighted me ; from the moment you drew the portrait of Sir Charles Wentworth, my heart whispered me, *this is the man to make my friend happy*—heaven grant it may be so. I congratulate you on meeting with Mr. Sackville ; I feel inclined to love him for his attention to you.

Should

Should your good uncle resolve to go abroad, it will be a painful determination to me, but, I will not be selfish enough to prefer my private gratification to his more valuable health. To see you previous to your setting out, will be indeed a supreme felicity. Your advice, my beloved friend, shall be strictly adhered to; but I hope I have indulged wrong ideas; if this girl marries Thurkill, surely there can be no improper attachment from another quarter; my spirits revive in that hope; pray let every thing I have written, be a profound secret. I shall address you again soon. Always my dear Mrs. Bertie,

Your truly affectionate friend,

EMILY MENVILLE.

LETTER

LETTER III.

ROBERT MARTIN, ESQ. TO JOHN CHAMBERS, ESQ.

I RECEIVED your letter, Jack, but have not time to employ myself at present about *your* business, for my whole mind is absorbed in plots and contrivances. I have, however, spoken to Williams, who has promised me he will immediately comply with your wishes, and go to Gray's-Inn. Since I wrote you last, I have made but little progress in my amour; I ventured once to express myself rather warmly, but received such
a cursed

a cursed rebuff, as silenced me at once. I have however time to contrive, for she every day expects a month's confinement; you may laugh; few women in her situation are charming, but by heaven, this sweet woman grows more alluring every day, and I hope to welcome her convalescence with rapture. Colemore has absolutely made proposals to the country parson's daughter; I could hug the demure fellow for his kindness, in ridding me of an eternal Argus. Thurkill has designs on Miss Shepherd; I don't understand that business, for I am sure there is an affair between her and Menville; tant mieux, it shall go hard if I do not make that turn to my advantage, for retaliation is always allowable you know. Mary Smith is dead, I hear; what an obstinate whimpering little puss, to break her heart, rather than live the life of honour with me, who could have liked her for—a month at least. Thank heaven, there are not many such foolish damsels in this great town, or what would become of honest fellows like me, who love
all

all the sex. London fills fast; Menville's visitors are become numerous, which I am sorry for, as it lessens my opportunities of being with his lovely wife; but like the subtle serpent, I will whisper poison in her ear, and make her jealous; on that plan I found my hopes; vanity she has no share of; compliments are thrown away, but I must pique her love and pride together, and in the moment of vexation and resentment, humbly offer myself as the instrument of revenge. Glorious thought! I will pursue it. Adieu, Jack, be assured Williams will mind your affair; mean time, if a hundred pounds will be of service, my banker shall answer your draft,

Yours, sincerely,

ROBERT MARTIN.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

MRS. BERTIE TO MRS. MENVILLE.

OUR route, my dear Mrs. Menville, is at last determined on ; this day fortnight we set off for Spa, and on Saturday next I hope to embrace you, as we shall stay a week in town, previous to our going to the continent. Sir Charles Wentworth has declared himself in form. I have not yet given a decisive answer, but my friends will not let me be cruel, if I were inclined that way ; yet he must wait a little ; I shall rejoice to introduce him to you, and take your judgment, before I decide for ever. Mr. Sackville and
Sir

Sir Charles accompany us. Mr. Gaywill and his fair bride are returned. Mamma Gaywill gone off to her country seat in doleful dumps; she told my aunt, that next to her expectations of having a *titled* daughter, she should have preferred me to any woman; but a cheese-monger's offspring! heaven and earth, what a blow to ambition! *she* could not wait their arrival; but some wags here set the bells a ringing, and the bride's mother was so delighted, that she actually gave a public breakfast two days after; I am told the company was not numerous nor genteel, but however it will be a prodigious thing to talk of, that "Mrs. Hamwood gave a public breakfast in honour of her daughter's wedding." How I trifle when my heart is full of you, and every moment appears an age 'till we meet. Heaven preserve you,

CHARLOTTE BERTIE.

LETTER

LETTER V.

CAPTAIN HARLEY TO MISS ELLIS.

A Thousand thanks to my dear Miss Ellis for her obliging letters. 'Tis not possible for you to conceive the transport I feel at the sight of your hand. Yet I sometimes open your epistles with an anxiety which hardly permits me to break the seal. But "you are all well and happy;" thank Heaven. 'Tis the first wish of my heart, that those I love better than myself should enjoy felicity.

Some

Some time ago, when the unfortunate Colonel B—— bequeathed me such a considerable addition to my fortune, it afforded me no satisfaction; I regretted that it came too late to procure me happiness, and could scarcely believe it possible riches should for one moment give me real transport. I was mistaken. I adore that Providence which has placed me in a situation to befriend the unfortunate. I bless the generous donor, whose bequest has given me the power to make others happy. O! my sweet friend, I have a tale of woe to unfold, which, but for the reflection that it now no longer exists, I should forbear to wound your feelings, by the repetition of such cruel sorrows.

About eight days since, I was taking a solitary ramble by the side of the lake, when I observed a little boy, who appeared about nine or ten years of age, sitting on a low bank some distance from the common path-way, with his head leaning on his hand, and in an attitude of sorrow. I walked up to him.

The tears were streaming from his eyes. I spoke : he lifted up his head, and discovered to me the most interesting countenance I had ever seen, pale and emaciated with the traces of sorrow and misery in every feature. " My good boy," said I, in French, " from what cause arises your grief?"

He answered me faintly in English, " I do not understand you, Sir."

Delighted at finding a young countryman, I took his hand; " My young friend, tell me, are you ill? or why are you crying?"

" Yes, Sir," he replied, " I am ill enough, but my poor mother and sisters are worse than me; my father, I hope, is in heaven."

" Your father and mother! Tell me," cried I, eagerly, " where do you live?"

" In the wood, Sir."

" Shew

I “ Shew me the way directly. I will be their friend.”

The boy looked frightened at my earnest manner, but rose immediately, and with feeble steps conducted me to the wood. His weakness would not permit him to keep pace with my impatience. I asked him why he came to the lake?

“ Because, Sir, I could not bear to see my father dead, and my mother dying. I came out to beg bread, but I had not strength to reach the town, so I thought I might as well lie down, and die too.”

This artless tale affected me greatly. In a short time we came to the thickest part of the wood, where I saw a little hovel, not much better than our cow-houses. I desired the child to go in before, and prepare them to expect me. I followed. Good Heaven! what a scene presented itself: never shall I forget it, nor can description do it justice.

In

In the upper part of this room, if it can be called such, or rather stable, extended on some straw, lay the form of a man, to all appearance dead, or dying: a woman on her knees, almost without motion, her face joined to his. At a little distance, on the bare ground, sat two lovely, though emaciated, and almost naked little girls, one not more than six years old, the other about eight. Their tears and cries wrung my very heart.

“ Here is the gentleman, mother,” said the boy.

She raised her languid head. But, good God! such a look; such significance of woe, despair, and misery, I never beheld. *She* could not speak: it was with difficulty I could articulate my words.

“ I beg your pardon, Madam. I come, if you will permit me, to speak peace and comfort.”

"Peace and comfort!" she exclaimed, and her head dropped in its former position.

I was distressed beyond measure. Not one of those young creatures had strength to go so far as the town, or my house. I had some salts with me: I advanced to the unhappy woman. "Smell to this bottle, Madam; try its effects on your husband. I will fly to procure you cordials and assistance."

She took the bottle in her trembling hand, stared eagerly in my face, but spoke not. I run out of the wretched place; and my own house being nearest, soon reached it. I got some wine and biscuits, some lavender, and ordered my two servants to follow with bed-clothes, and such necessaries as they could bring, and were immediately wanted. My horse being got ready, I was almost instantly back to the wood, though obliged to fasten the animal some distance from the cottage, as the wood was too thick for him to penetrate. On my entrance I found all the children

children round their wretched parent: he had shewn some signs of life. I advanced, and with a tea-spoon put a little wine into his mouth four or five times: it revived him. I soaked some biscuits, and made the mother and children take them: they eat eagerly, but spoke not a word. The man now opened his eyes; his wife put a bit of biscuit into his mouth, but it was with difficulty he got it down. However, in about ten minutes, all of them appeared a little revived, and were capable of taking some refreshment, for I gave it but in small quantities. The poor mother was the first who broke the affecting silence: she grasped my hand with *her* poor emaciated one.

“Angel!” said she, “blessed angel! you have saved us all!”

She burst into a flood of tears. I rejoiced to see them; they gave ease to a heart overloaded with grief.

“ Be comforted, dear Madam ; weakness and sorrow have reduced you to this unhappy situation. Thank God, I have the power and inclination to relieve you from both. Has your husband any particular disorder ? ”

“ Oh, no ; 'tis grief, poverty, and want of food : but tell me, are you an Englishman ? ”

“ I *am*, Madam, your countryman, your friend.”

She clasped her feeble hands in thankfulness to Heaven, and then gave the poor man some more biscuit. The sweet children kissed my hand ; the boy flung his about my neck, almost drowned in tears.

“ O ! my father will not die, my dear mother will live ! O ! what good luck I should meet such a kind gentleman ! ”

My

My heart was deeply affected; the sensations I felt cannot be described. During this scene my servants arrived with the necessaries I had ordered. What additional joy! I got a bed made up in another corner for the sick man, and assisted my servants to remove him into it. He fainted with the fatigue, but soon recovered, and appeared sensible of the pleasing change. The straw was removed, and another bed made in its place for the children. I ordered one of the servants to go into the town for more food, and bid one of the maids come with him to stay that night with this distressed family, resolving, if they could be removed the following day, to prepare rooms for them in my own house.

Some narrow minds might have suggested that guilt or shame had driven them here to perish; frigid caution might have whispered suspicion of dishonesty and unworthiness; but the heart of a Briton is always open to compassion and humanity: they were miserable,

and almost starving: another day, and all might have been over; the father and mother dead; the poor children wandering in the woods, without sustenance or clothes. O! my friend, judge of my transports; to have the power of preventing such fatal events, to see the dim eyes of the parents running over with tears of joy, to see those dear objects of their care kissing and exulting with each other, than crying out, "O! the dear gentleman! See that dear gentleman, who has made our father and mother alive again!" Never, no, never was joy equal to what I felt."

It was three days, however, before the family could be removed, and then they were accommodated in my house with convenience; every requisite article was provided for them; and 'tis scarcely possible to conceive the alterations in their persons. The poor sick man looked quite the gentleman; and his wife had an air of respectability and fashion about her, which was really interesting.

interesting. My friend Clayton was greatly taken with them, and very fond of the children, who are beautiful and engaging in their manners. They had been in the house five days before I would permit them to talk of their affairs; but the sixth, when Clayton and I called in to pay our morning compliments, the gentleman requested we would be seated.

“ I can never, Sir, sufficiently bless the kind Providence,” said he, addressing himself to me, “ which threw my poor boy in the way of your observation, nor can the feelings of a grateful and much-obliged heart tell you what I feel every hour for your unbounded goodness.”

I was going to speak.

“ Permit me, Sir, to go on. I know what you would say; but I must judge from facts. *You* have preserved *me* from death; *you* have rescued *my wife* from despair and

misery; *you* have fed, have clothed *my little ones*, who must otherwise have perished with cold and hunger. Can benefits like these fail to impress a mind of sensibility with everlasting gratitude! No, Sir; whilst this heart, which you have warmed, has power to beat, it will be deeply sensible of kindness as unexpected as unexampled. With a liberality and candour, known only to honest, generous minds, you have relieved me without knowing if the objects of your bounty were deserving or worthless. 'Tis my duty now to be explicit in every circumstance of my life."

I interrupted him. "Be assured, Sir, we have no idle or impertinent curiosity; and if, as from your situation in the wood we may suppose to be the case, you have any painful circumstances, any incidents which must distress you in the relation, let me entreat you to suppress them, and think only at present of the pleasure we shall experience in seeing you

you and your family perfectly restored to health."

"To sympathizing minds, like your's," answered he, "I may give pain; but it becomes my character to leave no doubts in the bosom of my benefactor; if, therefore, you will spare me an hour after dinner, or any time you are most at leisure, you will add to those favours you so liberally confer."

We promised to attend him after dinner, and kept our word. He then addressed us in the following words:

'My name is Neville; I am descended from a younger branch of that honourable family in England. My father was a clergyman, with a living of three hundred pounds a-year. A marriage with a worthy young woman, who had no fortune, disobliged all his relations. Within six years after this union he had five children. He now found his income very insufficient to support and educate such

a family, yet both him and my mother were economical. I was the eldest of two boys: my three sisters were younger. My father took the charge of our education upon himself. I was intended for the church. My brother William early discovered a predilection for the navy: at thirteen he went on board a man of war as a midshipman. I pursued my studies with my father; and, from being constantly his companion, acquired a gravity of disposition and deportment which made me appear older than I really was, and gave me consequence in the neighbourhood.

“ I was about nineteen, when a baronet in our parish made me an offer of attending his son abroad as a tutor. Youthful as I was, he thought me capable of the charge, though the young gentleman was within one year of my own age. The Baronet assured my father he would amply provide for me: a living was in his gift of five hundred pounds a year; a very old incumbent possessed it, and

and that should certainly be reserved for me at his death. Offers so liberal could not be rejected. I was introduced to the Baronet's family, which consisted of two daughters (whom I had never seen but at church) and the son. The younger of the ladies engaged my attention greatly; there was a softness, an elegance in her manners, that charmed me; every succeeding visit added to the prepossession, and when the hour of our departure came, I felt inexpressible tortures. I was compelled to leave the lovely Lucy, without daring to disclose my passion, and without a single hope ever to call her mine. Grief and despair took possession of my soul, and my worthy parents imputed my sorrow to the love and affection I had for my family. We went to France, to Italy; and Mr. Summers treated me with extraordinary kindness. He heard frequently from his sisters, and I was always mentioned with regard. Time and the impossibility (I thought) of ever gaining the object of my wishes, subdued in some degree the anxiety which had long preyed

on my mind. My companion was desirous of going to Venice: I had no objection. In an evil hour we entered that city: it was the carnival time, when every degree of licentiousness was permitted, I may say invited. Mr. Summers entered into every amusement with an eagerness I had never before witnessed; for, though his conduct had been now and then a little irregular, yet he behaved with decency, and appeared to wish me unacquainted with it; and as there had been nothing very atrocious in his actions, I was unwilling to lose my consequence with him by ill-natured observations.

‘About a week after our arrival at Venice, I lost much of his company; he had separate engagements, in which I was not invited to partake. He once or twice was absent the whole night. I grew very uneasy, and employed our servant to find out where those nights were spent, though I was hurt at having recourse to such means. I was soon informed he was warmly attached to a beautiful

beautiful courtesan. I was by no means pleased with this intelligence, yet I looked upon it as a less evil than associating with men of infamous characters; the carnival would soon be over, and our stay short: I therefore endeavoured to reconcile myself to what I could not prevent.

‘ One evening, which I was spending at the house of a gentleman to whom we had been recommended, a person came in, and said there had been a great riot at the house of a famous courtesan, and he heard a gentleman was killed. A cold shiver seized me, though I knew not why; but hastily apologizing for my absence, I ran home; and in a few minutes poor Summers was brought in dangerously wounded. He opened his eyes on my exclamations, and feebly said, “ ’Tis all over. Forgive me, dear Charles. Tell ——”

‘ He could say no more, but closed his lips for ever.

‘ You

‘ You may suppose how dreadful must have been my situation. I could gain little information; the courtesan was fled; the company in the house was not known, having put on masks, and mixed with the crowd. You are no strangers, I presume, to the difficulties a foreigner has to encounter under circumstances such as I have related. However, by the assistance of friends I got thro’ them; the body was interred, and I prepared for my journey home, oppressed with sorrow. I wrote to my father, and requested he would break the melancholy news to Sir Thomas Summers. Alas! I little conceived the shock I was soon to sustain. On my arrival in England, I hastened to the parsonage, having previously written from Dover. When I came to the house, a maid-servant in mourning opened the door as the chaise drew up. I shuddered; but jumping out, enquired how all the family did.

“ My mistress and the two young Misses are poorly enough, God knows,” said she.

“ My

“ My father, how is my father ? ”

“ Lord, Sir, why my master and Miss Charlotte are both dead in the small pox.”

‘ I heard no more ; my senses fled ; and on recovery I found my mother and two elder sisters weeping over me. The scene that followed will not bear repetition. I was soon informed poor Charlotte had caught the small pox ; and my father, not knowing but he had had them, was constantly with her. It turned out a putrid sort, and both fell a sacrifice to that horrid malady. Myself and the two elder ones had it in our infancy : but neither of my parents approved of inoculation.

‘ I found the successor to my father had given my mother notice to leave the house. From our income nothing had been saved. The household furniture was all we could call our own.

‘ The

‘ The following morning I sent a card to Sir Thomas, with an account of his son’s effects and my expences: I could not then see him. My whole attention was taken up in what manner to dispose of my mother and sisters; our little all could not exceed two hundred pounds: I was without the power of adding to it. The promise which Sir Thomas Summers had made me I looked upon as very doubtful, now, the tie which bound us together was broken, and at best it was a distant prospect. However, as, at all events, we were obliged to quit the house, I could not bear my mother should receive a second summons. I therefore went to a farmer’s in the neighbourhood, to procure board for the present, determined to remove in a day or two at farthest.

‘ The second morning after I had wrote to Sir Thomas, I received a message, desiring to see me at the Park. I obeyed with a fluttering heart: I had a father’s sorrows to encounter, and perhaps the lovely Lucy’s tears.

tears. When I was conducted to the library my heart was very full; the emotions of the unhappy parent soon overcame the little resolution I could boast: we both wept as we embraced. 'Tis needless to repeat our conversation. Indeed, I fear you are already tired with this tedious preface to my misfortunes. After some time, we grew more composed. He requested I would spend the day with him, and led me into his daughter's dressing-room. Our meeting was truly melancholy: I was received and treated as a brother.

'After dinner Sir Thomas enquired into the situation of my family. I frankly told him our difficulties. He was much affected, and mused for some time. At length he said, "If Mrs. Neville would not be offended at the offer, I should be very happy to make my house her future residence."

"And Miss Nevilles, my dear papa," cried Lucy, "would be delightful companions for us."

"Well

“ Well then,” said Sir Thomas, “ make the propofal, Mr. Neville, and assure your mother I fhall think myfelf obliged by her acceptance of it; and for you, my young friend, fomething muft be thought of another time.”

‘ Deeply impreffed with gratitude for kindnefs I fo little expected, I took leave of this worthy family. As I parted from the Baronet, he put a bit of paper into my hand. “ Accept that,” faid he, “ till fomething better is done.”

‘ It was a bank note for three hundred pounds.—On my return to my mother, I related what had paffed: fhe fighed deeply.

“ I do not think, my dear fon, I ought to be a burthen on you; much lefs can I confent to live a dependant. Sir Thomas does not want a houfe-keeper; his daughters have long fuperintended in his family; therefore my fituation there would be a ftate of obligation

ligation I am unable to support. I have this day heard of a lady who wants a person as a house-keeper, and whom she might consider as a companion: this will suit me; and I have requested application to be made about it. Your sisters are desirous of going as teachers into some good schools, and I approve their intention. I think Sir Thomas himself must applaud our resolution, not to be useless burthens on our friends."

' Although my mother's words pained me to my very soul, yet I could not blame her determination. My sisters were lovely girls, particularly the eldest, now near eighteen; the other a year younger. Fanny was tall, elegantly made, a clear complexion of the brunette kind, and most expressive countenance: she was sensibility itself; alas! too much so. Eliza, the youngest, was rather short of her age, but delicate, and a pretty lively countenance, with great vivacity in her disposition.

' The

‘ The next day I thought it my duty to wait on Sir Thomas, and related what had passed between my mother and self.

“ If your mother could not find her own happiness here, far be it from me to urge it. She is a truly-respectable woman; but she must consider my house so far her home, that should the situation she chuses at any time prove disagreeable, she will instantly leave it, and come with us, till she meets with something more eligible. Meantime, I insist upon it, that your sisters spend two or three months with my girls, and we will look about for them.”

‘ To these kind offers I acceded with many thanks that flowed from a grateful heart; and in short, in less than a fortnight my mother was settled agreeably with Lady Marston, my sisters at the Park, our effects disposed of, and I had my residence at the farmer’s, till I could obtain some situation suitable to my talents and inclinations.

‘ I was

‘ I was now a constant visitor at the Park. A long stifled flame again burst out ; and the charming Lucy was dearer to me than ever. Conscious of the impossibility that my passion should ever be rewarded, I had no remedy but absence : I therefore made all possible enquiries for a similar situation to the one I had lost. During this time two gentlemen came on a visit to Sir Thomas, Mr. Harlowe and Mr. Binmore, men of fashion and large fortunes. I very soon observed the former was attached to Lucy ; and the latter paid more than common attention to my sister Frances. Jealousy, and the duty of a brother, made me a close observer. I was not pleased, and therefore took an opportunity of speaking to my sister. She blushed, and answered me, I thought, very coolly. I was hurt, and was casting about in what way to remove her from the house, when an accident happened that made an entire change in our affairs. Sir Thomas and his guests went out one morning a hunting party ; the former, in leaping a gate, was thrown from his

his horse, and dangerously hurt. He was brought home, but only lived three days. A few hours before he expired, he called me and his daughter Lucy to his bed-side. "I have seen the struggle between love and honour; and perhaps, had I lived, might have entertained different views for my child, and have wished you at a distance; but now, to give her an honest, worthy man, who can support her decently, is all I wish for. Lucy has five thousand pounds: you must soon come into possession of the living which is secured to you. If, therefore, you love each other, Heaven grant you may be happy."

"Our emotions cannot be described. I fell on my knees; Lucy did the same."

"Shall I join your hands, my children? Speak freely, Lucy."

"Without raising her head, she gave me her hand, and faintly said, "Your wishes are mine, my dearest father."

"My

‘ My joy, my transport was inexpressible, and only checked by the scene before me. He endeavoured to exert his strength, and went on, “ My estate goes to my nephew. This house and land I purchased; it is left by my will jointly between my daughters; but I believe ——”

‘ Here his strength, his voice failed him, he grew convulsed, his daughters were led out of the room, and I remained till he breathed no more. The gentlemen visitors of course left the house.

‘ Mr. Summers, now Sir William Summers, came over to make his claim, which was soon settled; and we very quickly observed a growing partiality between him and Miss Summers. This was by far the happiest period of my life: my mother happily settled, my Lucy soon to be mine for ever, and my sisters, at her request, to reside with us. In short, not to tire you, in less than eight months after the Baronet’s death, Sir
William

William Summers married his cousin, and I was united to her sister. The former generously gave up his claim to his share of the house, &c. until I should come into possession of the living, which happened about three months after; when the house was let, and we took possession of the parsonage, a delightful spot, and only three miles from Sir William's. We lived in the greatest harmony for three years, when all my happiness was blasted for ever by two fatal and horrid events. I had for some days observed my wife looked ill and was low-spirited; to my anxious enquiries she only pleaded her situation, being young with child, (we had already a boy and girl,) and I sought to amuse her by every method I could devise, supposing that to be really the case.

‘ One evening I was walking in a little shrubbery behind the house, when I thought I heard my sister Frances speak low, and was answered by a man equally in as low a tone. Curiosity, or rather affection, impelled

led me to listen; but, great God! what were my feelings when I discovered, by the conversation, the gentleman to be Mr. Binmore, (who, I should have told you, had some time before visited at our brother's, but did not appear to retain any of that partiality he had before shewn to my sister, and therefore I retained no suspicions of him.) The wretched girl said enough to convince me she was undone by the villain; who pleaded his father's pride and avarice as an excuse to evade marrying her for the present, but strongly solicited she would soon follow him to town, and he would provide her with every accommodation. 'My friend,' added he, (which friend, I thought, was Harlowe,) 'will assist you in getting off, and have a post-chaise ready to convey you to London.'

'I heard no more: that instant one of the servants came running up, crying out, his mistress was ill. Almost lifeless, I flew to my Lucy, whom I found just recovered from a fainting fit. The anguish of my mind

cannot be expressed. Eliza was with my wife, who grew better. I asked how long she had been ill, and was informed immediately after Sir William Summers had left her. I did not know of his being at my house. I now enquired after Fanny: she soon made her appearance, and then I saw conscious guilt in her face. I shrunk from her sight; and leading my Lucy to her dressing-room, entreated her to go to bed. She readily complied with my request. I could not return to the parlour: I was distracted. I went to my study; I wrote a note to Mr. Binmore, requesting he would meet me the following evening at the bottom of the shrubbery, on particular business. This note I ordered a servant to carry early in the morning, as I knew not but he might set off for London. I retired to bed, but not to sleep: my wife was equally restless. I began to suspect she knew something of the affair, but I did not chuse to question her. We passed a wretched night. She said, however, that she was much better. I could not bear the presence

sence of Frances till I had seen Binmore, and therefore went out to dine with a friend, having previously received an answer from Binmore that he would attend me.

‘ In the evening I repaired to the spot, where he soon made his appearance. My blood was on fire. I very concisely told him I had been a witness to his conversation the preceding day, and demanded that he should instantly make my sister his wife. I cannot repeat to you the insulting answer he made me. I called him an unprincipled villain. He repeated the word; and drawing a brace of pistols from his pocket, offered one to me, and bade me forget my cloth and meet him, man to man, or he would brand me for a coward, and my sister for a ——. Enraged beyond the power of any consideration to withhold me, I snatched the pistol; and both firing the same instant, my shot entered his breast, and he fell with a heavy groan. Repentance and horror seized

me at once. I ran to him. With another groan he expired. My distress was inconceivable: like a mad-man I flew to the house, without considering consequences, and went up the back-stairs to my apartment, that I might not meet my wife or sisters; but just as I was stealing by Lucy's dressing-room, I thought I heard her voice as if in tears, and presently a man's saying, "You preach in vain; nothing shall deter me from my purpose."

' I burst open the door. My wife was on her knees to Sir William Summers; he held both her hands.

"What, what is all this?" cried I.

' She instantly swooned. He turned furiously to me.

"Well, Sir, and what explanation do you demand?"

"I de-

“ I demand,” cried I, eagerly, “ to know why I found my wife in such a posture *before* you ?”

“ Another time, when I am better prepared,” answered he, “ you shall know.”

‘ He attempted to leave the room. I caught his arm. “ You shall not leave me in uncertainty.”

“ *Shall not !*” he repeated in the highest rage, and attempted to strike me. I avoided the blow by stepping aside ; and giving him a violent push, he fell with great force against the corner of my wife’s wardrobe. At that moment she began to shew signs of life ; and my two sisters and a servant, alarmed by the voices and noise, came into the room. Frances instantly screamed, and flew out of the apartment ; the servant ran to take up Sir William ; whilst I flung myself into a chair, without life or motion. He was conveyed senseless to a bed, and a surgeon sent for.

My wife, as she recovered, held out her hand to me: I took it, pressed, and kissed it. Eliza prevailed on her to be put to bed. She was too ill to resist or speak. The events of this last hour were like a horrid dream. I knew not what course to take: I was lost in conjecture, and overwhelmed with misery.

When the surgeon came, I attended him to Sir William's room: he was alive. The surgeon examined his head. 'Twas all over; the skull was fractured, and death inevitable. He attempted to speak, but could not; his agitation was great: he pointed at me two or three times. I saw the surgeon eyed me with suspicion; but before I could speak, a servant came into the room, crying out, "Lord, Sir, Mr. Binmore is found murdered in our shrubbery!"

The agitation of my mind now overcame me: I fell on the floor. When I returned to life, the surgeon, my sister, and
servant

servant were with me. I could not bear to see them. I groaned most dreadfully. My sister and the servant were ordered to leave the room. The surgeon said, "The calamities of this night are so horrible, that I cannot express what I feel. I am persuaded, if you *are* concerned, if you *are* accessory to what has happened, you are innocently so; but the world may judge otherwise, and your safety must be provided for. Trust me with your secret, Sir: on my faith and honour you may rely."

' As well as my distraction would permit, I related faithfully what had passed. The surgeon was extremely shocked.

"You are indeed unfortunate, but not, I think, guilty. The circumstance of your writing to Binmore is the only one that can appear against you. Sir William's death may be attributed to accident. I will examine Binmore's body, and see if your note is about him."

"The worthy man left me with trembling steps. I went to my wife's apartment: she was recovered, and in tears; I was glad to see them.

"O, my dear husband," she cried, "what will become of us!"

"I prest her to my bosom, and entreated an explanation of the scene in which I found her. With evident reluctance, and much confusion, she acknowledged, that for above three months past Sir William Summers had declared a violent passion for her; that the horror which she expressed he only laughed at; that she found he was a libertine in every sense of the word; and, although he had so long imposed upon us by his apparent sobriety, she was informed, he had since his marriage seduced two girls in the neighbouring village, and had been guilty of the grossest enormities. Feeling the utmost detestation, it was with great difficulty she could bring herself to behave decently to him in
our

our company; and she took the utmost precaution to avoid being alone with him; but, by some means or other, he always knew when she was so, and never failed to visit her, and urge his guilty passion. Since the visit of Mr. Binmore he had been more importunate, and had even the audacity to propose her going off with him to France. She said she now threatened him with her determination to acquaint me of his baseness. Desperate at this, he swore bitterly, that if, by any word or look of mine, he discovered she had put her menace into execution, that instant should be the last of my life, though his own death was the immediate consequence. Terrified by his wickedness, she was obliged to keep the fatal secret.

‘ This day, after tea, he came up to her dressing-room: my sister Fanny was with her: she left the room on some occasion, and then he told her he was determined to be fooled no longer: she should accompany him abroad, and have an agreeable companion of

her own sex whom she could not object to; that he hated his wife and me to so violent a degree, that if she refused, he was resolved to murder both, and fly, never to return, having taken all necessary precautions as to money matters. It was then she flung herself on her knees to him.

“ You kneel in vain,” said the monster. “ My friend Binmore has perhaps by this time done your husband’s business; but that is not now my concern.”

‘ She again renewed her entreaties.

“ You preach in vain,” cried he; “ nothing shall deter me from my purpose.”

‘ Those were the words I heard when I burst open the door. You may easily conceive, gentlemen, my astonishment, that such atrocious crimes could have existence, much less in the bosom of a man I esteemed as a friend and brother. Before I had time to
comfort

comfort my poor unhappy Lucy, the surgeon came in. "Sir," said he, "you must leave the house directly; no time is to be lost: come with me immediately; I pledge myself for your safety, and will take care of this lady."

' My wife was in a state of madness. He dragged me away, giving Eliza a charge to watch over her till his return. Taking me down the back-stairs to the stable, where his horse stood saddled, "Mount instantly," said he; "make the best of your way to Dover; get safe into France, and then write under cover to Mr. Grafton, Surgeon, London, who will forward it to me."

' I mounted the horse without speaking. The generous man put his purse into my pocket, and I set off with all the speed I could. The darkness of the night favoured my escape: at five in the morning I arrived at Dover, and fortunately found a packet ready to sail within two hours. The hurry

of my spirits precluded my being sensible of fatigue, or the want of refreshment. I was soon called on board, and in a few hours safely landed at Calais, where I took a bit of bread, drank a glass of wine, and proceeded on my journey to Boulogne. Almost instantly as I alighted, I fainted. The people of the inn very humanely put me to bed, and sent for an apothecary, who let me blood, and in all probability saved my life, for I had a raging fever, which flew to my head, and for two days I was insensible of every thing. A naturally-good constitution, and the attention I experienced from the medical gentleman who attended me, restored me to reason, and a sense of the bitter misfortunes that had so recently befallen myself and family.

I now recollected with terror the manner in which my sister Frances run out of the room, that she had never appeared afterwards, and the situation of the poor unhappy girl, the misery of my Lucy, and the distraction of my mother and Lady Summers, altogether

altogether formed such a scene of horror to my view, that I could have welcomed death with pleasure. I wrote from Boulogne, determined to wait there for an answer, which it was eleven days before I received, a prey to the deepest remorse, for the death of two men who, however infamous, ought not to have fallen by my hands, and were indeed very unfit to die; the anxiety I felt for my family, and the uncertainty of my future destination, were objects of such terror to my mind, that when the long-wished-for letter came, I could hardly find steadiness in my fingers to open it. Nearly as I can remember the contents were these:

“ When the Doctor had seen me safe off from the house, he returned to the room, where the body of Mr. Binmore lay, brought in by the servants. He had previously examined the pockets; my note was not there. He was considering in what manner to break the affair to Lady Summers, when a number of people burst into the house, with a constable,

stable, demanding me to be given up to them. Struck with surprise, he asked what they meant, and from whom they had received such vile intelligence. The constable told him from my own servant, who had given the alarm in the village, and said I had sent him with a note, to decoy Mr. Binmore to the shrubbery, and afterwards to get Sir William there, because I wanted to force Mr. Binmore to marry my sister, and was jealous of the other with my wife."

' Improbable as this story might appear, from the whole tenor of my life, and my sacred character, yet the villain's story made an impression on the villagers, and with the constable, as a screen to their curiosity, they proceeded to the house, demanding to see the bodies, and to have me in custody. My friend, to gain time, told them I was with my wife; that they should fasten all the doors and windows to prevent my escape, told some of them to watch below, whilst he took others up to see Sir William's body: by
these

these means he gained time. Secure, as they thought, of my person, their reverence for my character and for my wife returned, and they very readily agreed it would be cruel to separate us, whilst Madam was so very ill.

‘ About three hours after my departure, however, when they were all seated comfortably in the kitchen, they were alarmed by the noise of a carriage; and when the door was opened, in rushed Lady Summers with an air of wildness, demanding to see Mr. and Mrs. Neville. The Doctor, Mr. Wellford, conducted her to my wife’s room: she, wishing to exculpate me, and desirous of concealing Sir William’s depravity, declared he had entangled his foot in the carpet, and fell against the wardrobe. As this could not be contradicted, poor Lady Summers regretted only the premature death of her husband at first, but recollecting Mr. Binmore, “ Ah !” said she, “ but how came Binmore to be murdered in your shrubbery, and where is Mr. Neville ?”

‘ Unable

‘ Unable to answer those questions, poor Lucy burst into tears ; and being accustomed to speak the simplest truth, she at last confessed the whole affair to her sister, who, overcome with sorrow and mortification, fell almost senseless on her bed, when Eliza came into the room, demanding to know what was become of Frances, as she was no where to be found. Both ladies, unacquainted with any particular relative to her, were equally ignorant and surprised at the question. Every room, every avenue and garden, was searched in vain ; poor Fanny was not to be found, (and from that hour to this I never could learn her fate, or whether she is dead or alive.)

‘ My friend added, that, from what motives he could not explore, my own servant had given notice to Mr. Binmore’s friends of the murder ; that my gown was to be taken from me ; and the living decreed to be in the gift of Lady Summers, who had already declared she should appoint my curate ; and,
from

from reasons he could not account for, seemed absolutely to have withdrawn herself from my family. Mr. Binmore's uncle had come down, and breathed nothing but revenge and prosecution against me as a murderer, the note I sent his nephew being found by Lady Summers, and delivered to him. My friend concluded by requesting I would seek out a safe and comfortable habitation, on the first notice of which my Lucy and her children would join me."

' This letter, you may suppose, added no small distress to what I already suffered. To be proscribed, to lose my living, to be stigmatized as an assassin, to have my gown taken from me, and banished my native country, (for I had no witnesses to prove my innocence as to *intention*,) all these melancholy considerations crowded on my mind, and rendered me the most miserable of men. Added to this was another painful circumstance: the five thousand pounds which Sir Thomas Summers left to each of his daughters,

ters, had been at the request of Sir William left with him, to pay some purchases, and for which he paid me five per cent.; but I had only a simple acknowledgment to shew for it, and *that* I left in a bureau that stood in my library. I wrote immediately to Mr. Wellford, requesting he would search this bureau, with my wife, and have advice what steps were necessary to be pursued to secure the property. I resolved to stay at Boulogne until my wife joined me; for, as to returning to England, with a character so infamous, and under circumstances so reproachable, I could not bear the idea of. I wrote to my dear Lucy and to my mother. The uncertainty of poor Fanny's fate was terrible, a thousand times worse than a knowledge of her death could be; but I still hoped to hear that she had fled to her mother at Lady Marston's. I soon heard from my friends, alas! dreadful was the intelligence! Lady Summers had joined Binmore's family in a prosecution, which must preclude all hopes of a return, had I been inclined. The
bureau

bureau had been examined; no such paper as I described could be found; Lady Summers denied any knowledge of the five thousand pounds being left with her husband; she refused to see her sister, and behaved with the greatest barbarity. Mr. Wellford still proved a friend: he assisted my wife in disposing of her effects, and requested she would reside at his house till she could join me. Lady Marston had the goodness to send for my sister Eliza to live with her and my mother, who was in a most deplorable state of health, from her distress of mind. The good, the generous Wellford sold every thing to the best advantage, promising that nothing should be wanting on his part to discover my lost paper, and oblige Lady Summers to do me justice.

‘ In less than a month my poor dear Lucy joined me, with her two children, and about three hundred and forty pounds; this was our all. I will not describe our meeting: I cannot even now think of it without emotion.

tion. I had, when abroad with Mr. Summers, spent near a month at Geneva. I liked the country and the people; there I determined to reside.

‘ We left Boulogne, after writing our friends, and arrived, without meeting any accident, at Geneva. I placed my money in the hands of a banker, and tried to get some employ to teach English, the dead languages, writing, &c. In a short time I had a few pupils, and for about four years lived decently, though happiness could never return. During this period my mother died; my friend, Mr. Wellford, had become a widower, and married my sister Eliza; Lady Summers had espoused the gentleman to whom she had given my living till her son came of age. No traces of any acknowledgment for the five thousand pounds could be found, and therefore all hopes of a restitution was totally given up.

‘ About

‘ About six months ago, the banker, in whose hands I had placed my money, which was now reduced to less than two hundred pounds, failed for an immense sum. The intelligence was like a thunder-bolt. What was now to become of my Lucy and her children! I was seized with a violent fever; it proved of the putrid kind. My pupils were all taken away. Heaven in its mercy spared my wife and children from the infection. For some time my life was despaired of. When the crisis was past, and the disorder abated, I found almost every little thing of value we had my poor wife had parted with to support me. Our prospects were dreadful. Weak and ill as I continued, I made application for my former pupils, No. “ The house was infectious, I was incapable of my duty, and they were otherwise disposed of.”

‘ Thus cut off from every assistance, we sold the little that was left, and, with the amount of about four pounds, I resolved to reach

reach some village, and try my fortune there. Slowly and painfully I quitted the town. We entered this wood: I could walk no farther. With extreme difficulty my wife got me to the hut you found me in. Here the fever fell on my nerves: a total debility succeeded, which for near six weeks kept me hovering between life and death. By this time our money was nearly expended, as my wife spared no expence to support me. I was not yet able to travel; my poor Lucy, with grief and abstinence, was reduced to a shadow; and another fortnight left us without the means of procuring any thing but bread and water. This miserable situation brought on my former weakness: I could no longer stand. I expected to see the dear objects round me perish with want. I then, from desperation, grew resigned: I prayed we might all die together, as a less evil than to leave them behind. For two days we had only three small cakes between us: indeed I was incapable of partaking. Hunger drove my poor boy out, it seems, to beg
for

for bread; and in that hour it pleased the Almighty to guide the steps of the most generous and humane of mankind to the spot where faintness compelled my poor child to rest himself.

‘Blessed God,’ added Mr. Neville, folding his hands with fervour, ‘I adore thy divine Providence. Thou hast given power to the generous heart; thou hast sent thy worthy instrument of mercy to preserve a valuable woman and her dear infants from the grave.’

‘Oh, Sir,’ addressing me, ‘men like you find in their own feelings, in the conscious rectitude of their own hearts, more real gratification than the most eloquent acknowledgments can bestow. No language can do justice to the sensibility of *my* soul.’

I interrupted him. “You judge right, Sir, in supposing I am more than rewarded for the little service I have been so fortunate
to

to render you, in seeing you and your amiable family so much recovered. Henceforth consider us as your brothers, and your children as ours."

Without waiting for a reply, which indeed he was unable to make, from his strong emotions, we quitted the room, commenting on his extraordinary and shocking story. Clayton said he remembered, some years back, seeing it in the papers, that a clergyman had murdered his brother and friend, and fled to the Continent.

Thus, my dear Miss Ellis, I have related pretty faithfully Mr. Neville's misfortunes, as I committed the story to paper the same day. I have the pleasure to say he is now quite well, though anxious to get into some way of providing for his family. This, we tell him, must be our business. Mrs. Neville is a most amiable woman, both in person and mind; the children doat on us. In short, I have felt more calm satisfaction, more resignation

signation and content within my bosom these last three weeks, than ever I expected to feel again. Ah! what a blessing is riches, when it enables us to assist our less fortunate fellow-creatures!

I hope my future letters will be of a less melancholy cast, and that those you honour me with may contribute to my peace; for whilst those I love and revere are happy, I cannot be miserable. Adieu, dearest Miss Ellis.

Your ever obliged,

FREDERIC HARLEY.

LETTER VI.

MRS. BERTIE TO MISS ELLIS.

WITHIN three hours, my dear Miss Ellis, I bid adieu to London, with a heart deeply impressed with sorrow for the situation in which I leave my dearest friend. Oh! what were my emotions when I beheld that lovely face (for lovely she must ever be) clouded, and struggling to appear cheerful and happy. Good heavens! what depravity in the hearts of some men; what a difference

difference between that pert, insignificant girl, Miss Shepherd, and the amiable, the charming Mrs. Menville. Yet I see plainly the coquette is preferred, and my sweet friend neglected. My heart is bursting with indignation; and it was with the utmost difficulty I could keep my temper within bounds.

To you, my dear Miss Ellis, I bequeath my interest in her affairs during my absence. Oh! "watch her with a care like mine," soften her sorrows, and if possible bring her unworthy husband to value the treasure he possesses.

Either I am much mistaken, or her father is not so blinded as she hopes for; yet I blame not him so much as her good-for-nothing uncle. But I will not dwell on the subject. My motive for writing you now is, to entreat the favour of your correspondence during her confinement. Heaven

AMTTL

F 2

grant

grant her a safe recovery. I feel a thousand pangs at being obliged to leave England at this time; but the obligations I owe to my uncle and aunt will not admit of an alternative. Pray, therefore, write me every thing and about every body; and may felicity attend you and my beloved friend, prays

CHARLOTTE BERTIE.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. BERTIE.

HOW quickly flew those hours of happiness I enjoyed in the company of my dear Mrs. Bertie ! fled, perhaps, never to return. Ah ! what can compensate for the loss of such a friend ? but I will not murmur nor repine ; I will be thankful for the good I enjoy, and bear inevitable evils with patience. Miss Ellis is good and affectionate, she will not unite herself to Mr. Colemore, 'till my expected confinement is over, and I am selfish enough to accept of the sacrifice

at his expence. Mr. Menville told me last night, every thing was in forwardness for Miss Shepherd's marriage with Mr. Thurkill; a house had been taken that day in Manchester-Square, and I should be desired to go and look at it in a day or two, when the furniture was put in. He surprised me greatly, by saying old Shepherd gave his daughter ten thousand pounds; I had no idea the man could have spared half the money; Miss Ellis is equally astonished. Mrs. Shepherd comes up in a few days, and the week after next the wedding takes place; it has been managed secretly and suddenly I think, but I own I shall rejoice at her departure from me, though I sincerely wish her happy. Lady Hartwill and her amiable sister are my constant visitors, and I feel both delight and much improvement from the intimacy they honour me with. On Thursday se'nnight is to be our grand rout and supper; I have neither health nor spirits to enjoy a crowd, but I shall endeavour to exert both to please Mr. Menville. Martin behaves better, he

is more distantly respectful, and I feel less restraint in his company than I used to do. Lord Longfield visits here frequently; he is a most sensible elegant man, much superior to all others of our male friends. But are you not angry I have so long delayed to mention Sir Charles Wentworth? yet what can I write more than I told you, when I said I thought him deserving of my beloved Charlotte; I payed him the highest compliment any man could deserve, and I will not pardon you if you trifle with his passion, or delay his happy day, after you are settled abroad. Was there not a little, *a very little* cruelty and caprice, in refusing to marry him here? alas! so many are the disagreeables we meet with in life; so frequently are our best friends, our best hopes, torn from us, that we should embrace with transport the opportunity which presents itself, of being in possession of one fond, one faithful friend, a blessing so rarely met with; think of this my dear Mrs. Bertie, and accept happiness when in your power to obtain it.

I broke off on the entrance of my father and brother; we have had a long and most affecting conversation; Harry sails next Monday; my father leaves me the following day; he questioned me with the most scrutinizing look, "*If I was happy?*" I answered with eagerness, "that I was entirely so;" he said, pray heaven you may ever remain so; your assurance has given peace to my breast.

"Why was the question necessary my dear Mrs. Bertie? do I ever *appear* to be otherwise? I must speak to Miss Ellis to answer the question, and to teach me the art of disguising my feelings, if my countenance betrays me; for I would not for the world look otherwise than contented to my family and friends. I am going an airing, or, in the fashionable phrase, to air. Adieu.

During our absence Mrs. Shepherd arrived four days sooner than she was expected, and indeed without any invitation at all
on

on my part; you never saw a woman so pleased and so vain on her daughter's intended marriage. "She shall now spend every winter in town, Mr. Shepherd could have no pretence to deny her, when she had her daughter's house to go to." The daughter put up her lip with a very significant smile at Mr. Thurkill, which might be easily translated into, "I believe you will find yourself no welcome guest." After we were withdrawn, the young folks being at the bottom of the room, Mrs. Shepherd was expatiating on the former subject, and observed, that with Mr. Thurkill's income, and the *seven thousand* pounds Mr. Shepherd gave his daughter, they might live very handsomely."

"Seven thousand, madam," I replied;
"I thought Miss Shepherd had ten."

"And so I *shall have ten*," said miss, who had caught my last words, and hastily advanced towards us.

“ Shall you indeed ?” cried the mother, “ and where is it to come from, I want to know ? if you have friends to give it you, well and good ; but I think the *five thousand* from your father, was more than you could expect.”

Miss Shepherd, bursting with rage, rudely interrupting her mother, exclaimed, “ Upon my word, madam, if you came up to town in order to quarrel with, and insult me, I could have spared the compliment ; I am sure (with a haughty toss of her head) you have no reason to complain.”

What there was in this pert speech to silence the mother, I know not ; but her looks grew more placid, and she instantly changed the subject. I was however by no means capable of conversation ; there was something in the *seven thousand*, and then the “ *five thousand from your father*,” beyond my comprehension. Miss insisted she had ten ; Mr. Menville told me she had ten ; there must

must be a deception some where intended ; I was lost in conjectures, and those not pleasant ones, when the gentlemen entered the drawing-room. Miss Shepherd, with a look at her mother, rose up, they went out together, soon returned, and with very different countenances, both cheerful and pleased.

I am not naturally curious, but I own I would give almost any thing to know the truth of this mysterious business ; but I fear the secret lies too deep for me to fathom. I am much fatigued, and shall close this letter and dispatch it to Paris, from whence I hope to hear from you. I shall write again when our route is over. May every happiness attend you and your worthy friends, and believe me ever,

Your truly affectionate

EMILY MENVILLE.

L E T T E R VIII.

MISS ELLIS TO MRS. BERTIE.

DO not be alarmed, my dear madam; thank heaven all is over, and Mrs. Menville free from all danger.

On Thursday night last we had a prodigious number of persons at Mr. Menville's entertainment; above two hundred and twenty. Every thing was conducted in a style of magnificence and grandeur that surprised me; doubtless his fortune is immense. His amiable wife exerted herself to the utmost;

most ; every body was charmed with her ; I never saw her look more lovely. I was afraid for her, and once or twice bid her beware of fatigue.

“ I can never feel it,” was her answer, “ whilst entertaining the friends of my husband.”

It was near six o'clock before all the company left us ; I was heartily tired, and Mrs. Menville began to acknowledge she was not sorry to retire ; about nine in the morning her woman came into my apartment, and as gently as she could, acquainted me her mistress was very ill, and the accoucheur sent for ; I hastily threw on my clothes, and was with her in a moment ; she was ill indeed.

“ My dear Miss Ellis,” said she, “ God knows whether I may live or die, I hope I am resigned to his will ; if the latter, tell Mr. Menville I have ever retained the warmest sentiments of duty and affection for him ; tell
my

my dear father,"—here a violent pang prevented her from proceeding; the doctor came; good heaven! how severe were her agonies for four hours—at length she was safely delivered of a *girl*. I was in transports, I flew down to Mr. Menville,

"She is safe, she is safe, the child is born."

"What is it?" cried he eagerly,

"A girl," I replied, "a beautiful girl!"

"I wish it had been a boy; but however, I am glad to hear she is safe and well; when she wishes to see me, I will come up."

Disgusted at the air of indifference which accompanied his freezing words, I quickly left him, and returned to my friend; how great was her transport, how earnest, how grateful her thanks to heaven, for the blessing she enjoyed.

"Write,

“ Write, write my dear Miss Ellis, to my father, now I feel what it is to be a parent.”

I promised to obey, and requested she would be calm and composed; she wished to see her husband, and in spite of his former indifference, he could not see her and the child without visible emotions. She said,

“ My dear Mr. Menville, this is a new tie to cement our affection.”

The nurse requested her not to talk, and he took a very tender leave. This is now the third day, and the doctor pronounces her, as far as human judgment can aver, to be perfectly free from all danger; she will nurse the child herself, and has prevailed on Mr. Menville to consent to her wishes; I hope it will not be too much for her delicate frame; and then I must own I think her perfectly right, for surely, 'tis the duty of every mother, nor can I be persuaded there ever will exist that tender reciprocal affection between

tween parent and child, when separated in early infancy.

Miss Shepherd is to be married on Tuesday ; I dare not venture all my conjectures about this Marriage, but I see things which I greatly dislike ; and last night Mrs. Menville's woman, who is a very decent, prudent person, said to me, as I was undressing,

" Thank God, madam, my dear lady is safely delivered, and that Miss Shepherd is to be married on Tuesday."

" You are not sorry to lose that young lady, or are you rejoiced she will be so well married ?"

" Indeed, madam, I am very glad she is going from here ; at any rate, I am sure she is no friend to my lady."

" I am a little of your opinion, Mrs. Norton, I assure you."

" Ah !

"Ah! madam, you are so good you don't know half the wicked doings that are going forward; I have heard and seen such things; but it does not become me to make mischief in a family, yet I know that Miss Shepherd is a wicked young lady, and so thank God she is going out of this house."

This was our dialogue; I did not chuse to press her for intelligence, which I feared would realize my conjectures, for I am convinced she is a worthless girl, and her mother a very despicable character. They appear mighty attentive to Mrs. Menville, and anxious for her health, yet do not scruple going out every evening to some pleasurable party with Mr. Menville; but I care not, so that our beloved friend gets well; I trust every thing else to the care of Providence. My best compliments to all you love and honour; our fair invalid sends her

her best wishes, and bids you remember,
happiness is in your own power.

I am, ever dear madam, your sincere

obliged humble servant,

E. M. ELLIS.

P.S. Mr. Harry Oswald sailed last Monday,
and his worthy father returned to Sudbury
the following morning.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

MISS ELLIS TO MRS. BERTIE.

I SHALL continue to write on my dear madam, until your friend can resume her charming pen; conscious as I am what a poor substitute she has chosen, I can only shew my readiness to oblige, by my obedience to your commands.

'Tis now a late hour, all are retired to rest after a very busy day. This morning, or with more propriety I should say, yesterday morning,

morning, Miss Shepherd and Mr. Thurkill were united in Mr. Menville's drawing-room, Miss chusing to have the eclat of a special licence, and to be married in the house. Mr. Menville gave her away, and to do the lady justice, she looked very well, and not the least embarrassed; she was well drest too, and Mrs. Shepherd most abundantly fine for a morning. After the ceremony was over, they walked into Mrs. Menville's room; she congratulated them *with fervor*, I thought, as if glad to be rid of a charge, always unpleasant to her feelings. After their return to the drawing-room, Mr. Menville presented Miss, I beg pardon, I mean Mrs. Thurkill, with a most beautiful and compleat set of pearls; an elegant and bountiful present from a *father*. We had a most superb dinner; I earnestly wished to have been excused partaking of it, and should have been a thousand times happier, to have shared my friends boiled chicken, but neither would she or they permit it; I was therefore obliged to join the jovial party, for such they all were; and

and when the gentlemen came up to tea, Mr. Thurkill was so flushed, that I thought it very improper for a man of delicacy, in his situation; I gave his lady some credit for her good humour, and the little observation she made on the occasion; but the mother looked both surprised and displeased. We played two or three rubbers at whist, and having some refreshments about eleven, at half past twelve Mr. and Mrs. Thurkill, with Mrs. Shepherd, departed for their own house, greatly to my satisfaction; and I assure you, there was no appearance of discontent or regret on the part of Mr. Menville; on the contrary, he indulged himself in a hearty laugh, at the expence of the bridegroom, whose disorder was but too visible. I quickly left him, and having stepped in to take leave of his angelic wife, I took up my pen to relate the occurrences of the day past; and now my dear madam, I bid you adieu for the present.

Mrs. Menville recovers amazingly fast; she sat up two hours this evening; the child
is

is a lovely creature, even its father (who is greatly disappointed in his wishes) by her appearance, now and then pronounces it is very pretty. We see him only once a day, for about ten minutes; he is seldom at home of an evening, and now Miss Shepherd is no more, we shall see him less than ever, I suppose. When I look back to the happy hours we spent, at the time you and Captain Harley were at Sudbury, when Emily Oswald was the delight, the ornament of every party; and think of the frustration of all our wishes, by a man whose violent passion, whose ardent love, aided by his over-grown fortune, indeed, was capable of making a worthy man break his word, and take advantage of his child's love and filial duty, to oblige him in a point so inimical to her own more humble views of felicity. When I recollect the raptures, the adoration, the generosity of Mr. Menville, and now see him, within ten months after his marriage, so careless and inattentive to the same object, the sole business of whose life seems devoted to the study of his pleasure.

Ah!

Ah! my dear Mrs. Bertie, how painful are my feelings, how mortifying my reflections, on the depravity of man. Yet this sweet woman, neither by word or look, gives the smallest suspicion that she is not perfectly happy. Grant heaven I may never have her trials; if they are proportioned to our prudence, I never shall, for I feel I should fall far, far beneath my amiable friend, in the practice of that virtue.

Mrs. Thurkill sent a card this morning, to enquire after Mrs. Menville, so polite, she should make her personal enquiries to-morrow. I wish her husband would take her out of England with all my heart, and then I will cordially wish her health and happiness; at present her significant smiles, her artful glances, and the levity of her manners, make her quite odious to the "country parson's daughter," as she once called me in a pet, and I received the appellation as a compliment. Mr. Martin is here daily, his enquiries are anxious, but respectful, yet I don't

don't like him, there is something in his manners—however, I will not hazard false conjectures. Lord Longfield is my favourite, a faithful, an affectionate, a mourning husband, a black swan my dear Mrs. Bertie! shew me such another pray, for the honour of the sex, with whom I am in no charity at present; although there is one would persuade me he is an exception to an almost general rule; but does not every man say the same before marriage? and how few observe it afterwards! I allow the present licentious conduct of many married women, as well as the levity and forwardness of very many young ones, justifies a gentleman in being extremely cautious how, and to whom he unites himself for life; but when he has chosen, when he is fortunate enough to find the wife of his choice, truly good, amiable and virtuous; when her whole time is given up to the study of pleasing him, promoting his peace, and making herself the delight of every society he wishes her to enjoy; tell me, where is an excuse to be found for the

inconstancy, the vitiated taste of a man, that can prefer one of the most trifling of her sex, to a woman so nearly allied to perfection? in short, I find myself so much out of humour at present, that I shall lay aside my pen, and visit one who will teach me that candour and patience I feel I am in want of.

Several days have past without any particular occurrence; Mrs. Menville now sees company, and looks more lovely than ever; Lady Hartwill and her sister are here daily; they are charming women, and what is to me the criterion of their merit, they admire and love our friend; we see less than ever of Mr. Menville; once a day, for five minutes, he drops in to see his wife, and behaves with all the polite indifference you can imagine.

I fear there is a blow preparing for Mrs. Menville, which will give her exquisite pain; a letter I received yesterday from my father,

mentions the increasing illness of Mr. Ofwald, who is desirous of concealing it from his daughter at this time; but from the day of his return to Sudbury, he has gradually grown worse; his son Anthony, who was going to the continent, is now with him; I don't like that young man half so well as poor Harry, who is gone a fortune hunting to India; he has nothing pleasing, nothing conciliating in his manners, and I think an abundance of self-sufficiency, a common fault with young men who have a smattering of every thing, without judgment to know their deficiencies. I am now to give you the pleasing intelligence, that Mrs. Menville intends to-morrow to resume her pen, and rid you of an uninteresting correspondent; and what will add to your satisfaction, is, that in all probability, this will be the very last letter you will *ever* receive from

Your sincerely affectionate,

I can yet sign,

E. M. ELLIS.

My

My dearest friend,

She will not permit me to see her letter, but I have insisted upon adding a post-script; next week my kind Miss Ellis leaves me, and returns to her parents, and will be united to a truly amiable man. I know you will rejoice in her felicity; I most sincerely do, severely as I must feel the loss of such a companion. I thank heaven, myself and sweet girl are in perfect health. I shall soon resume my pen.

Your affectionate,

EMILY MENVILLE.

G 2 LETTER

LETTER X.

ROBERT MARTIN, ESQ.

TO JOHN CHAMBERS, ESQ.

THANK ye Jack for your good wishes, I hope they will be propitious. My charmer is restored to health and her friends; she is a thousand times more beautiful than ever; I am all that is obsequious, respectful and attentive; she begins to treat me with more familiarity and politeness; something will be done in time. Curse on that stupid fellow Menville, for introducing Lord Longfield here; I can see (for what escapes a lover's

lover's eye?) that he exceedingly admires Mrs. Menville, who indeed does not except the dolt her husband, who is mad after Thurkill's wife, Miss Shepherd that was; yet why should I be angry with him, for that circumstance which makes in my favour? Thurkill keeps open house, a Pharo Bank too; I always suspected his fondness for play; let Menville beware, or he will soon be pigeoned; there is a knowing set frequents the house: every thing, I think, works for me; we have got rid of my eternal Duenna, the clergyman's daughter, she is returned to her parental fields, and is about this time to be married to the precise Colemore; a charming puritanical pair! that Lord Longfield, that Lady Hartwill, and her demure sister, are with Mrs. Menville for ever; I must contrive to separate the party, or I shall lose a thousand opportunities; I think to make Menville jealous, for I don't believe the fellow a *very* complaisant husband to his wife; yet I have contrived to manage matters so,

G 3

that he has no more suspicion of me, than he would of parson Colemore himself.

I have done the business faith ! I broke off on the entrance of Menville himself. After

some little introductory chat, I said carelessly,

“Don’t you think there is a wonderful alteration in Longfield, since he visited at your house ? his Lordship, a short time ago, could scarcely bear the sight of women ; now he is so attentive, so polite to Mrs. Menville, feels so much delight in her company, and is so constant in his attendance, that if you would have the goodness to drop off, faith I believe he would have no objection to a second marriage, provided the lady was willing.”

“I have indeed taken notice,” answered Menville, with a constrained air, and features not very placid ; “I have seen his Lordship’s very great complaisance to my wife, nor do I like quite so much of it, for
women

women have so much innate levity about them now a-days, that upon my soul I believe, if Lucretia or Portia themselves, were to come among them here, they would soon feel the contagion, and resign their heroics. But I have no wish for notoriety through the civilities of my wife, therefore I shall throw a little cold water on his Lordship's great friendship."

I coolly observed, he might be very disinterested, his character was in general respectable; but changing the subject as if indifferent to me, "How does Thurkill and *his wife*?" I am ashamed of my little attention to them; he's a good sort of fellow enough, and she a most agreeable pleasant woman. Menville's face was in a flame.

"Yes," said he, with some confusion, "they are very pleasing people; they see a great deal of company, and one is always sure of amusement there."

"And amusement," I replied gaily, "is the business of our lives, I shall therefore drop in sometimes to seek it, as well as others. A little desultory conversation concluded the visit; he will certainly give his wife some lessons about Lord Longfield; and I am persuaded there is a good understanding between Menville and Mrs. Thurkill, I suspected it before her marriage; and, would you believe it, the bridegroom got *tippy for joy*, on his wedding day! what a letter for one who hates writing like me! adieu, Jack, I am glad the money was an accommodation."

Your's, faithfully,

ROBERT MARTIN.

LETTER

L E T T E R. XI.

MRS. COLEMORE TO MRS. MENVILLE.

THIS now three days since I became a wife, my dear Mrs. Menville, and in a little more than three weeks, I hope to see you. My father and mother are wonderfully fond of Mr. Colemore, and to do the man justice, he has some good qualities; many insinuating ways, and then, such a proof of judgment in selecting me from the beautiful and well-portioned damsels, to whom he might, without the imputation of vanity, have made proposals; I dear one, what a triumph

to my self-consequence ; can I help loving a man, who has made me so well pleased with myself? but to be serious, I have every reason at present to think myself a fortunate woman ; and a circumstance which enables me to look forward with hope and confidence, is, that Mr. Colemore intends to reside chiefly in the country, a town life agreeing as little with *his* taste as my own. We shall therefore avoid the contagion of example, nor be seduced from the right path by those delusive pleasures which ruin the morals and fortunes of the rich and great. Would to heaven a certain person was at liberty to follow her inclinations ; and apropos, suppose, as your father is not very well, and is extremely anxious to see you, and your little angel, suppose you were to be guilty of such a great piece of self-denial, as to *ask leave* of absence for a fortnight, to visit your friends ; it will confirm your health, do your sweet babe a world of good, give you the higher relish for the diversions of town when you return back ; and though the season of the
year

year is not very inviting, yet your inducements are great: your father, my father, joins in the request; name an early day, and Mr. Colemore and myself will meet you on the road. How go on the Thurkill's? how does my favourite Lord Longfield, Lady Hartwill, and her sister? yet do not trouble yourself to answer my questions by pen and ink, tell me every thing personally—think of the pleasure you will give us all, by complying with our wishes. Make my respects to all you love, and believe me in every situation of life,

My dear Mrs. Menville,

your ever obliged,

and truly affectionate,

E. M. COLEMORE.

Mr. Colemore desires I will say every thing for him that is respectful and kind.

LETTER XII.

MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. COLEMORE.

A FEW lines only, my dear Mrs. Colemore, to make my sincerest congratulations to you, on a union which has every prospect of happiness your warmest friends could wish for you; may they be permanent and equal to your merit. Your obliging wishes for my company are answered; I ventured to acquaint Mr. Menville of the indifferent state of my father's health, and desire to see him.

" Certainly,

"Certainly, Mrs. Menville, I can have no objection to your visit; a fortnight's country air may be of service, both to you and the child."

Thus, then, I have permission to wait on you. Next Tuesday, about eleven, I shall set off for Sudbury; my heart beats with joy, to revisit those shades where I pass my happiest hours; to embrace a father whom I revere, and friends whom I love; to visit the tomb of a fainted mother, to recall her precepts, her example to my memory, and implore the Almighty to guide my mind, and instruct my judgment, that I may, like her, quit the world with the delightful consciousness of having done my duty, both as a wife, mother and friend. Whatever my trials in this world may be, let me enjoy self-approbation, and I can never be truly unhappy. But I entreat your pardon for recurring so much to self, when I only ought, at this time, to rejoice with you. I have written to my father, and
in.

in four days hence, hope to see at Sudbury those I love and honour; 'till then adieu, my dear Mrs. Colemore, and assure yourself of my most perfect esteem and friendship.

EMILY MENVILLE.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. BERTIE.

I Write, my dear Mrs. Bertie, from the house of my beloved father; alas! shortly must I lose that reverend parent; I cannot deceive myself, all hope is fled, and I endeavour to learn resignation to the Divine Will; but the refractory heart repels my better reason. You may remember, on my father's arrival in town, I thought him greatly altered, and when he left me, I saw too plainly a decay of constitution, struggling with an active mind. Mrs. Colemore, after
her

her marriage, wrote, and entreated me to visit Sudbury; Mr. Menville was kind enough to spare me, and my good friends met me on the road. They prepared me by degrees to see my father, whom I found very ill indeed; Anthony was with him, but he has not the tenderness of my poor Harry; he received me with coldness enough, yet his pride seemed gratified by the appearance of my equipage. I have now been here six days, and every hour increases my apprehensions of a fatal event, which cannot be far distant. I have apprised my husband of my distress; whether he will come down or not, I can't say, but I shall thank him for the compliment if he does come.

I was called off to attend my father, just recovered from a fainting fit; he requested we might be alone; oh! my dear Mrs. Bertie, what an affecting conversation; I have been guilty of some falsehood during the course of it, but to speak peace and comfort to a dying parent; to sooth his last hours,

hours, and enable him to leave the world in peace with himself, must plead my excuse, and will, I trust, procure my pardon.

“ My dear child,” said he, “ I am hastening to join your angelic mother ; I have no regrets to quit the world, now my children are, as I hope, comfortably provided for, and at an age to know good from evil. One painful idea only obtrudes upon my mind ; and at this moment, when riches and splendour lose their fascinating charms ; when piety and virtue appear to be the only true blessings of life, at this moment I feel I did wrong to break engagements I had given countenance to, and wound two faithful hearts. Can you, my child, reconcile me to myself ; can you with truth say you are happy ?”

Kissing his hand, on my knees I replied, “ I am, *I am* happy, my dear father, Mr. Menville indulges me in every wish of my heart.”

“ But

"But is he affectionate, is he fond of his child, do you love him?" cried he.

"He is every thing I can desire, and I call heaven to witness, I love him truly, and him only."

"Then I am satisfied," he said, "my dear, my affectionate, my dutiful girl; you have made my last moments happy, receive the blessing of a parent who can truly boast, that from your infancy to the present hour, you never gave me a pang, but of my creating; let this be your consolation, my dearest Emily, when I am no more; my heart, my last words, will bear testimony to your goodness. I have no more to say, but that I hope my children will always live in unity and love with each other; heaven preserve my poor Harry, and may you meet again in peace. Commend me to your husband, tell him an obedient daughter must ever be an affectionate wife; I have given him a treasure, may he know its value, and
estimate

estimate it accordingly, and I cannot wish him greater happiness."

Such, my dear Mrs. Bertie, was the substance of our conversation; I repeat it with mingled emotions of tenderness and pride. Yes, my beloved father, your Emily will deserve your love; be you her guardian angel, to watch and direct every action of her life, and if the erring heart should ever, for a moment, forget its duty, may she remember her parents valued praise, and she must be virtuous.

E. MENVILLE.

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

MRS. COLEMORE IN CONTINUATION.

MY dear Mrs. Bertie, our amiable friend enjoins me to write, as she at present is incapable of holding her pen. The worthy Mr. Oswald is no more; he expired last night, blessing his children, with a perfect resignation, and a joyful hope of everlasting bliss. May my last end be like his! Mrs. Menville, though in hourly expectation of the event, could not support the stroke when it came; she was carried lifeless from the room, and we were very apprehensive both

both she and her sweet infant would have suffered severely. On her recovery to reason, I took the little cherub in my arms,

“ My dear friend, remember you are a mother.”

“ I do, I will,” said she with fervor, “ spare me for an hour, and I will be all you wish ; I retired—at the expiration of that time my father went to her apartment, and in less than another hour, brought her to us with a composed, though melancholy air. Being persuaded to retire to her bed, after taking some wine and water, and a bit of biscuit, I accompanied her for the night, which she in vain endeavoured to resist, for I would not leave her ; she slept but little, yet thank heaven, is this morning tolerably composed ; ’tis evidently seen that she struggles hard to obtain it, but the effort will succeed. I never saw such apathy and indifference in a young man, as in Anthony Oswald ; from whence had he that constitutional coldness ?

ness? Mr. and Mrs. Oswald had the kindest, most benevolent hearts in the world; my sweet friend, and the amiable Harry, are sensibility itself: but this youth seems a stranger to the softer passions; no matter, thank God no one is dependent on him. Mr. Oswald left about sixteen hundred pounds in money; one thousand is given to Harry, the other six to his little grand daughter; he would not, he says in his will, "pay Mr. Menville so poor a compliment, as to think it necessary to bequeath such a trifle to *his* wife." Anthony's estate is little more than five hundred pounds a year, therefore Mr. Oswald would not burthen it with legacies, but when he comes into possession of the living Mr. Menville secured for him, he is to pay Harry another thousand pounds from the estate. This last article does not please him; when the will was read this morning, to which my father and Mr. Menville are executors, he said, "He could not see why he should be obliged to pay a thousand pounds from what was a voluntary gift

gift of Mr. Menville to him, and he thought his father had no right to make such a bequest."

"That is not a matter now to be disputed," replied my father, "it may be long enough before your brother can claim *any thing* from you; you have two years nearly to reach one-and-twenty; Harry three, before he is entitled to any legacies, therefore, sir, if you please, let the affair rest for the present, and if you chuse to dispute your father's will, let it be when you may claim a right so to do."

This speech of my father's, silenced the gentleman, though his fullen looks shewed a rancorous heart.

Mrs. Menville has a letter from her husband; he excuses himself from coming down to visit her father, on some trifling pretences; desires she will be careful of her health, and concludes a short letter, with some cold compliments

compliments to her father and friends. I make no comments; Mrs. Menville will see no defects, may they be ever concealed, but I fear greatly for her happiness. Mr. Colemore receives letters from town, which give him great uneasiness; he almost adores Mrs. Menville, and laments she is united to a man, who appears so little sensible of her value.

This day, the sixth after Mr. Oswald's decease, his body was committed to the silent grave. *He* is happy, his friends are the only sufferers, but time will mellow grief into a pleasing remembrance, when we contemplate the rewards which attends the performance of our several duties. I have often thought, in the three last days of Mr. Oswald's illness, that could the boldest unbeliever, the most licentious libertine, have witnessed the ease, the tranquillity, the lively hope of eternal felicity, which beamed forth in every word and look of that good man, when talking of his approaching end, the hardiest wretch would

would have trembled at his crimes, and must have confessed, how awful, how beautiful was virtue and a self-approving conscience, at that tremendous moment! my amiable friend will soon resume her pen; she sends her best love, and I beg you will believe, my dear Mrs. Bertie, that although you have no longer a correspondent in the name of Ellis, you must ever hold a considerable place in the friendship and esteem of

E. M. COLEMORE.

LETTER XV.

MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. BERTIE.

Tuesday Night.

I Arrived in town yesterday, my dear friend, and met your welcome letter; though but a few lines, it conveyed the pleasing intelligence of your health and safety, and therefore gave me perfect satisfaction. I indeed want such stimulus to raise my drooping spirits, which are more than commonly depressed from the remembrance of the heavy loss I have sustained, and the apprehension

prehesion of the heavier evils yet to come. To have our friends cut off from us by death, is a natural event we must expect, and such as religion and resignation to the divine will, must in time reconcile us to support; but tell me, what consolation can be found, that may enable us to bear the loss of that affection which love and duty has made our chiefest happiness? where is the balm to heal a wound inflicted by the hand you adore? oh! my dear Mrs. Bertie, I can no longer deceive myself, no longer conceal my wretchedness; Mr. Menville has ceased to retain any regard for me. What was my reception yesterday, after three weeks absence! when I flew to Mr. Menville in the library, he turned his head at my entrance, and coldly said,

“How d’ye do Mrs. Menville, really the country air has not improved your person, for you are thinner and paler than ever I think.”

I was for a moment petrified, but recovering myself, I took his hand, and replied,

“ I have had some troubles, which may have altered my complexion, but my heart is unchangeably returned to you, and from your tenderness I hope to regain both my health and spirits ; but you do not ask after our little darling, *she* is, at *least* much improved ; shall I bring her to you ? ”

“ Not now,” answered he, carelessly, “ I am very busy.”

I took the hint, and told him I should retire to dress for dinner.

“ Do so,” was all his reply.

A flood of tears relieved my oppressed heart, on my entrance into my dressing-room, and it was some time before I could recover myself to ring for my woman ; poor Norton looked at me with enquiring eyes ; it struck
me ;

me; she had so often seen me in tears of late, why should she express by her countenance, more sorrow and curiosity than before now. She was too respectful, however, to ask questions, nor did I chuse to notice her particular attention. When the dinner was announced, I went down to the dining parlour, Mr. Martin, and a Mr. Anderson, with a Sir Edward Miller, were present, the latter I had never seen, consequently Mr. Menville was obliged to introduce him, and in doing it, there was such an expression of consciousness in his eyes, as gave me great pain. Sir Edward appeared to be a polite man, but there was nothing remarkable in his person or manners, and I should suppose him one of those common characters you meet with every where. Mr. Martin, however, by his politeness and respectful compliments, endeavoured to raise me into consequence with myself, and I behaved with as much cheerfulness as I could assume. At table I enquired how Mr. and Mrs. Thurkill did, Mr. Menville slightly answered, they were very well, and im-

mediately addressed Mr. Anderson. I happened by chance to look at Martin, his eyes were fixed upon me, he withdrew them with a sigh, and I thought, looked reproachfully on my husband; I did not appear to notice either, but soon afterwards withdrew to the drawing-room, and was followed by Martin, who began to talk of my friends the Colemore's, in a strain of panegyric, which insensibly engaged my attention, for what is so great a compliment to a delicate mind, as praising those we love—from talking of their merits with esteem; by a natural transition he mentioned the other pair, the Thurkill's.

“ I go there now and then,” said he, because one meets every body there. They have a Pharo table, and as that amusement is the rage of the day, their house is always crowded by both sexes.”

“ A Pharo table !” I repeated, “ Why I thought persons who admitted them in their houses, were perfectly infamous, liable to the
insults

insults of the mob, and exposed to the impertinent intrusions of every petty constable and informer who may chuse to search the apartments."

"Yes," replied Martin, smiling, "Yes, the poor devils who keep gaming houses for bread, are indeed amenable to the law, and run the risk of prosecutions and *persecutions*; but we are too polite to permit the laws to affect people of fashion who assist in framing them; on the contrary, persons above the vulgar, may brave every law with impunity, and Mr. Thurkill is by no means singular in openly encouraging gambling at his house; there are many of rank and fortune that do the same."

"I think myself very fortunate," said I, "that Mr. Menville has no passion that way, for really we country ladies have such dreadful ideas of the horrid consequences which attend a love of play, that I should conjure up a

thousand frightful images to ruin my peace whenever he was absent."

Martin looked at me with an air of surprise and concern, I thought; he made no reply, but got up, traversed the room two or three times without speaking, then sat down again, but with so much embarrassment, that my conjectures began to be very painful, and it was with trembling I asked,

"Do you and Mr. Menville ever play at Thurkill's?"

"Madam," said he, starting, as if he did not hear the question, which I again repeated."

"Yes, now and then," was his answer, and then, as if wishing to change the subject, he mentioned my little girl, hoped she was well, and asked, when we intended to make a Christian of her.

I replied,

I replied, "she was born such, I hope, and has been privately baptized before I left town."

"A second Emily, I suppose."

"Yes," I replied, "Emily Charlotte is her name."

"May she inherit the beauty and virtues of her amiable mother," said he, with fervor.

My heart thanked him for the wish. Indeed I begin to think much better of Martin, and although his conduct has been reprehensible in the highest degree, from your account of the unfortunate Mary Smith, and from some part of his former behaviour to me, yet I hope he has seen his error, and unless he is the most consummate hypocrite on earth, he is entirely weaned from his follies, and desirous of beginning a new system of life; I hope this is truly the case.

At tea we were joined by the other gentlemen; Mr. Anderson I do not admire, there is something bold and penetrating in his looks; he behaves politely, yet I cannot like him. Sir Edward I have mentioned before. When the company left us, Mr. Menville said,

“As you must be a little fatigued, my dear, you had better retire early; I am engaged out this evening; etiquette will not admit of your paying visits, until your friends have called on you, I am therefore obliged to leave you.”

“I beg, my dear sir, you will make no apologies, I shall go early to rest, and wish you much pleasure.”

He seemed glad to escape from me, I suppressed a rising sigh, and came up to my dressing-room. I have written thus far, and finding my spirits sink at the recollection, I bid you adieu, my dear Mrs. Bertie, for this night.

Thursday Evening.

Yesterday I had not an hour to spare to take up my pen; Mr. and Mrs. Thurkill, Lady Hartwill and her sister, General and Mrs. Woodward, and some others who were at our rout, had sent cards during my confinement, and to whom I had returned my thanks, previous to leaving town, payed us visits; Mr. Menville invited the Thurkill's to dinner; I entreated the same favour of Lady Hartwill and her sister, and not being particularly engaged, they kindly accorded with my wishes. We therefore spent a pleasant day, only interrupted by Mrs. Thurkill's fainting after dinner, from which she soon recovered, and which only created significant smiles among the men. I should be sorry to find my opinions governed by prejudice, or take an unjustifiable dislike to any person, yet I must confess, I feel an unaccountable shivering, and a something nearly bordering on antipathy, when Mrs. Thur-

kill approaches me. Let me not weakly indulge prejudices against any one, no, not even against *her*, to whom I have no obligations for even common politeness; but my dear friend, we cannot always repress our feelings, or conquer involuntary disgusts, and to esteem *that* woman, never will be in my power. Mrs. Shepherd, I find, returned that morning to Sudbury, not with her own inclination, but by the express commands of her husband, who is still very ill; I saw him but once, and then he appeared so weak and emaciated, that I could not help feeling pity, though I have a contempt for his character. Mr. Thurkill mentioned his design of going to Oxford this day on particular business.

His lady said, "having many things to settle in her domestic arrangements, she should play the good housewife, and shut her doors for one day at least, the first she could call her own since her marriage."

Lady

Lady Hartwill congratulated her in her gay manner, on being such an example to good wives, as to shut herself up to attend *domestic* duties. Mr. Thurkill, I thought, looked with a mixture of incredulity and contempt, Mr. Martin with an expression of disdain, but no one spoke. My little Emily, being by desire brought into the room, engaged every one's attention.

"What a lovely creature," cried out Mrs. Bloomfield, "Why, Mr. Menville, do you not doat on her?"

"Not absolutely," replied he, "she is very well, but I should have liked a boy much better; you know girls are always an incumbrance."

"And boys," retorted she, with some warmth, "if they resemble their fathers, are oftentimes a disgrace to their family by their profligacy: but this sweet child shall resemble her mother, and then you will have no
cause

cause to regret the incumbrance, as you politely term it."

"Dear madam," replied he, "do not be angry, has not a favourite author with your sex, presumed to call the ladies a drag on a man's fortune?"

"And by whom was it said," asked Lady Hartwill, by an ignorant young man, whose narrow ideas were confined to trade only, and who was deservedly despised for his want of judgment and liberality."

"You had better give up Menville, whilst you are well," cried Martin, "the ladies alone are too strong for you, and was it necessary, I would offer myself as an auxillary, so well am I convinced of their sterling merit."

"We are obliged to you, Mr. Martin," returned her ladyship, "but we can fight our own battles, even tho' our good friend here,
out

out of complaisance to her uncourtly Lord, does not chuse to lend her assistance."

"Convinced as I am, my dear lady," I replied, "that Mr. Menville only jests on the subject, it would ill become me to interfere; but I thank you in the name of the sex, for being our advocate, and I know your opponent is pleased that you so generously defend us, since no man thinks higher of women of merit, than Mr. Menville."

"No man has more just cause to think highly of them," answered her ladyship, tho' perhaps few are equally fortunate with himself, yet his gratitude for the happy distinction in his favour, ought to make him an enthusiast in our cause."

"At least, madam," he replied gaily, "I ought not to have sported my thoughts so freely, before ladies so respectable, I therefore acknowledge my error, and bow to your *unquestionable superiority.*"

His

His peculiar manner in pronouncing those last words, again called up her ladyship's pretended wrath.

"Wretch!" said she, "I disclaim your compliment, you are unworthy the blessing you possess; I will not enter the list with *you*; a mind hardened against conviction, is not an object to contend with, and your pretended humility is equally affronting with your illiberal sarcasms; but if any other gentleman," looking round, smiling, "is disposed to dispute our superiority, I am ready to throw the gauntlet."

"I believe, madam," said Sir Edward, "you will find none in this presence, hardy enough to accept the challenge; the empire of the ladies is established from authority, both ancient and modern, and it would be paying mankind a poor compliment indeed, if we could believe they submitted to a government their reason might condemn. On the contrary, I am disposed to think every
man

man of sense honours your lovely sex, and is conscious, in a thousand instances, how much you soar above us, when called to extraordinary exertions of virtue and fortitude."

"I thank you, sir," returned Lady Hartwill, "you have spoke the sentiments of a man of honour, and you have spoken truly, for I know several instances of women, whose conduct in the most trying circumstances, have evinced as much virtue, greatness of mind and fortitude, as the noblest Roman hero could have boasted. However, I beg the company's pardon for engrossing so much of the conversation to myself."

She then changed the subject, and very soon after Mr. and Mrs. Thurkill took leave, declining to stay supper, of which the others partook, and stayed 'till a late hour.

Mr. Menville dines out to day; I see very little of him, for yesterday he told me he could not bear to have his rest disturbed,
by

by the child's being brought to me, as it always is, once for the night, and therefore, till she was weaned, he would sleep in another room.

You may suppose, though I was mortified, I could make no objection; but the proposal too plainly proves his indifference, and my misfortune in losing the affection of my husband; every honest art I must try to regain it; I watch his looks, listen to the approbation he bestows on different women, and must, if possible, acquire some of those graces he admires in others; nor will I doubt my success; he is too generous not to be gratified with my attentions to please, and far from indulging sorrow, and brooding over evils, I will rally my spirits, assume a cheerfulness foreign to my heart, call in the aid of dress, of elegance, and neatness, and by having valuable acquaintance to enliven our parties, make, I hope, his home agreeable to him. Methinks my heart already feels lighter, from a certainty of success;

ever, "all is for the best." The old man died; she was absent upwards of three weeks, during which time Menville almost lived at Thurkill's; and, I am well informed, has lost very considerably at play: so much the better.

The beginning of this week Mrs. Menville returned; and never did she look so elegantly beautiful as in her sable dress. The insensible, the infatuated husband was the only man who could behold her without adoration.

Two days ago I dined there with a party. The Thurkills were present. The husband mentioned his intention of going to Oxford. Yesterday the lady announced her design of shutting her doors for the day, to attend domestic duties. I have such a contempt for her character, that I suspected some design was in her head; but I had no idea the journey was fictitious.

This

This morning about one o'clock, as I was preparing to go out, Jack Williams came in with a face brimful of intelligence. "O, Martin, I have a devilish fine story for you, a delightful discovery."

"Pr'ythee let us have it then," said I.

"Why then, what think you of your friend Menville being detected with his friend Thurkill's new-married lady?"

"The devil!" cried I. "Is it possible! Detected by whom, dear Jack?"

"Why, by the man himself. But you shall hear the story, as it is now circulating all over the town. It seems Thurkill had suspected an improper intimacy between them, and pretended a journey, with a view to give them full opportunity of being together. Where he concealed himself I don't know; but Menville dined there, and in the evening, when the gentleman and lady were enjoying

enjoying a comfortable tête à tête, he very unceremoniously broke in upon them, with his footman and groom. The consequence was, that he treated both with contempt, and, 'tis said, turned the lady out of doors, and designs to take a legal revenge on Menville."

"A pretty piece of business, truly," said I. Menville will cut a cursed silly figure before his wife, I think: as to the rest, I believe the lady was no vestal, and the fault, you know, is only a venial one in the eyes of the world."

"Aye, so you men of gallantry think; but, upon my soul, I would not seduce a virtuous woman, whether maid, wife, or widow, on any account."

"But if they seduce you, Jack?"

"That there are many women who disgrace themselves and families, I believe,"
replied

replied he; "but I heartily wish every gay, dissipated girl could hear the opinions of men on their levity and imprudence."

"Nonsense!" cried I, interrupting him; "don't pretend to be a censor, Jack. If the dear creatures will condescend to forget what they owe to themselves, in order to oblige us, why surely we cannot be ungrateful enough to preach them out of their kindness.—But come, I'll go to Menville's, and see how matters are there this morning. The wife, I dare say, will find some damned good-natured friend to tell her the story, with all its aggravations."

Accordingly, shaking off honest Jack, I walked to Bedford-Square. "Is your master at home?"

"No, Sir."

"Is your lady at home?"

"No,

“ No, Sir.”

Very strange, thought I, both should be denied.—I turned from the door, however, and resolved to call at Thurkill’s. I trotted on to Manchester-Square: here I was admitted in a moment, and found Thurkill in his library, writing.

“ So, Martin,” said he, rising, “ you have heard of my pretty adventure, I suppose, and are come to condole with the cornuted husband.”

“ Not I, faith,” cried I, very carelessly; those things are so common now-a-days, they neither require concealment or condolence. If you are mighty fond of your wife, why, indeed, I am sorry for you; but if not, ’tis of little consequence who she likes.”

“ Fond of her!” repeated he; “ to be sure I was fond of her; but I don’t think I

VOL. II. I should

should have married her, had not Menville persuaded me, and ten thousand pounds been backed to his arguments, as additional charms. But, upon my soul, I believe he had his own motives, and merely wanted me as a screen to her irregularities. I am determined, therefore, he shall pay for his good advice; and though I am not very desirous of being held forth to the public in so despicable a light, yet I will not quietly put up with an infringement on my property."

Thurkill's air and manner convinced me he wanted to pocket the affront, and that his love, at least, was not much wounded. I asked him what was become of his wife.

"Gone to the devil," said he, "I suppose, or to Menville."

Just at this moment a servant came in, and delivered a note to the following effect.

"ILL

"ILL treated as I am, I do not suppose you intend carrying your malice so far as to deny me my clothes. I have therefore sent my servant to bring with her every thing that is mine, in my wardrobe, drawers, or elsewhere, until, convinced of your rash judgment, you repent of your error, and feel for the disagreeable situation you have thrown me into."

C. THURKILL."

Thurkill read the note; and ordering the woman into the library, "Mrs. James," said he, "you are at liberty to remove all your mistress's wardrobe, except her jewels; those I have already secured; without possession of the brightest gem a female can boast of, her *reputation*, she is little entitled to wear others. I wish her well and happy, and am thankful she so soon threw off the mask, and preserved me from being the dupe of her infamy."

The servant courtesied and withdrew.—I was dying to know where she lived; but he, either from design or contempt, neglected to enquire. He told me his solicitor had been with him, and he intended laying his damages at 10,000*l*.

Having gained all the circumstances I could, I left him; and calling in at several houses, found every body busy about Thurkill's affair. Determined, however, to see Mrs. Menville, if possible, I presented myself at her door in the evening, and was admitted; but, to my extreme vexation, found that eternal visitant, Lady Hartwill, with her, who was just let in before me. I had scarcely paid my compliments before Lord Longfield was announced, whose countenance bore testimony to the uneasiness of his mind. Finding Mrs. Menville quite cheerful and easy, it was easily seen she must be entirely ignorant of the events which happened the preceding day. His Lordship slightly enquired after Mr. Menville. She replied, he
was

was well in the morning, but was gone in a party to Windsor.

Lady Hartwill looking at me, arose and went to the furthest window: I followed her. "Mr. Martin," said she, "doubtless you have heard the diabolical news of the day. What is to be done? The papers will be full of the affair to-morrow: she must know it. Good God! that any man in his senses could use such a woman ill!"

"As it is impossible to keep the matter a secret, I should suppose your Ladyship the properest person to break it tenderly to her."

The entrance of a servant with a letter caught our attention.

"From my master, Madam."

"Bless me!" cried Mrs. Menville, "what can this mean! no accident, I hope. Par-

don me, if my impatience obliges me to appear rude."

She hastily broke the seal, read a line or two, grew pale, and trembled. Rising up, "Have the goodness to excuse me for a few minutes," said she, hastily. But before she reached the door, she tottered, and fell senseless.

Lord Longfield, who was near her, rather broke the fall, but was not time enough to prevent it. Lady Hartwill and her woman conveyed her to her apartment. On returning life, she spoke not, only sighed most heavily. When they left the drawing-room, his Lordship, with an expression of grief and vexation in his looks, cried out, "There's a woman to be neglected and forsaken for an abandoned wanton! By heavens, I cannot bear it. I never saw more excellence in the sex than in Mrs. Menville: beauty is her least perfection. Fool, dotard! to "leave a Paradise, and wander in a desert." He took
up

up his hat. "Excuse me, Mr. Martin; I am unfit company at present. I shall send a few hours hence to know how the poor lady does."

He left the room. I waited some time in hopes Lady Hartwill would return. However, a servant only made her appearance, with her lady's compliments, and apologies that she was too ill to return again to the drawing-room. I was consequently obliged to quit the house, without knowing the contents of the letter, which excited my curiosity greatly; for what the devil can be said to a wife on such occasions! Good night, Jack; to-morrow, perhaps, I may write again.

Your's,

ROBERT MARTIN.

LETTER XVII.

ROBERT MARTIN, ESQ.

TO JOHN CHAMBERS, ESQ.

THIS morning, early as decency would admit, I posted to Bedford-Square. I enquired for Mr. Menville: he was gone out of town for a few days. "How is your lady!"

"She is better, Sir, but not well enough to see company this morning."

I left my card; and, although I never had visited at Lady Hartwill's, walked directly there,

there, and was admitted. She and her sister were at breakfast. I was received with politeness, and apologized for the intrusion, from the anxiety I felt on Mrs. Menville's account.

"A servant is just returned from Bedford-Square," said her Ladyship; "Mrs. Menville is much better. I am preparing to spend the day with her; for in her situation she ought not to be without a friend."

"May I ask your Ladyship the contents of Mr. Menville's letter?"

"Why," replied she, "he acknowledges the affair, makes a slight apology, says he shall be absent four or five days, and at his return hopes she will have conquered any little resentment which love or pride may raise, and meet him with good-humour; that such trifling affairs happened every day, and he expected his wife should be superior to narrow prejudices, nor think she has any

right to reproach him. Something in this style he wrote; and I left her with a resolution to answer, assure him of her affection, and entreat his return to a wife, whose whole study it should be to make him happy."

"What worthless creatures men are!" cried Mrs. Bloomfield. "This Menville is not a young trifling vain fellow. I should have thought some stability might have been expected from him, when united to a woman of beauty and merit. But men at all ages are alike, I think, dissipated, extravagant, and given up to what they call gallantry; that is, indulging their passions at the expense of the peace and happiness of their family and friends."

"Do not, dear Madam, be too general in your censure," I replied, (though my conscience gave me a little twinge, Jack.)

"Where are the exceptions?" answered she; "I believe you will find it difficult to point them out."

Before

Before I could reply, Lady Hartwill arose. The carriage was announced : I handed her into it, and said I should do myself the honour of calling at Mrs. Menville's door in the evening.

In the evening I went, and, contrary to my expectation, was admitted. I found the same party as the preceding day, with the addition of Mrs. Bloomfield. They appeared to be engaged in cheerful conversation. Mrs. Menville looked pale and languid, but pleasing and attentive to her friends. Lord Longfield and myself came away together. He expressed his admiration of her in the strongest terms ; but it was the mind, the manners that charmed him. With all my heart, my Lord ; let your admiration stop there, and I care not :

“ I take her body, *you* her mind ;

“ Which has the better bargain ? ”

He told me, by the advice of Lady Hartwill, she would open her doors as usual, and

appear to be entirely unacquainted with the reports of the world. But, Jack, all the sex are monopolizers; they hate rivals, and seldom forgive infidelities, unless they are persuaded to retaliate. To that point I must labour to bring this charming creature. Yet, would you believe it, libertine as I am, I sometimes have a sort of regret to level such a mind with the fashionable demi reps of the day. After all, it must be confessed, there is something beautifully interesting in virtue; something awful, that even libertines revere. And I swear to you, Jack, that, was I united to a woman like Menville's wife, I believe, yes, I verily believe, I could love and esteem her for life. But the women are grown so cursed licentious, the misses so bold and assuming, the wives so lost to modesty and delicacy, the husbands in general so accommodating, in order to screen or palliate their own vices, that, faith, a man who knows the world has but little inclination to marry.

I met Thurkill this evening. He goes in reality out of town to-morrow, to Wales, I think, having taken all necessary steps to bring on his affair; so that we shall soon see published, "Taken in Short-hand in the Court, the Trial of William Menville, Esq. for Crim. Con. with Mrs. Thurkill, &c."

When any thing new occurs, you will hear from me again; meantime, if I can serve you this side of the water, pray command me.

ROBERT MARTIN.

LETTER

LETTER XVIII.

MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. BERTIE.

COULD the scandal which now circulates at every tea-table, fashionable rout, and retailed by every newspaper, be concealed, my dear Mrs. Bertie, your friend would be dumb for ever; but, as I know you will hear the story with every malicious aggravation, I write to tell you, that though a worthless woman may have stolen my husband's affections for a time, I hope a late *dounement* will restore them to me more warmly than ever. I was indeed
severely

severely shocked at the time; but when I came to reflect, when I considered my situation in a comparative view with Mrs. Thurkill's, what are my sufferings to her's! Driven from her husband's house, branded with infamy, deprived of all her late boasted consequence, the jest of every licentious wretch, and shunned by every virtuous woman, without one consoling thought, one single reflection but what must occasion shame and self-reproach. O! my dear friend, what are my painful feelings compared to her's! Poor creature! how truly pitiable must be her destiny, if she feels the sting of self-condemnation! That Mr. Menville should have reduced any woman to a state so deplorable, is indeed a painful reflection; for him, for her I feel, not for myself, though I may bear the malicious smile, or meet the more humiliating words of pity. Conscious innocence, a sense of rectitude, and the particular attention I will pay my husband, shall support me through all the malice of the world.

Mr.

Mr. Menville went for a few days out of town; he returned yesterday, and entered my dressing-room in some confusion. I rose, and holding out my hand, "You are welcome home, my dear Mr. Menville."

He embraced me warmly. "I see," said he, "I need not have feared to encounter my Emily's looks."

"No, indeed," I replied, with earnestness, "you need not. I have no disagreeable retrospections in your company, and with always to meet you with smiles of tenderness."

"You are truly good, *I believe*," said he, "and I will study to deserve you."

I rang for my child: I thought he started when she was brought to me. He turned his head to the window with some emotion: I did not appear to observe it. He returned, kissed the little angel, and played with its hand.

"Do

"Do you see any company, my dear?" he asked.

"The same as usual: some friends call every day. You do not wish to be denied?"

"No, by no means," cried he. "I must stand the rub of a few witticisms, I suppose."

"A slight tax," replied I, smiling, and changed the subject.

We dined *en famille* with good-humour on both sides. In the evening several friends came in, but behaved with a decorum and respect my husband little expected, I believe, and contributed not a little to exhilarate his spirits. The worst part of the story is, that a prosecution is commenced against Mr. Menville, and his name will be exposed in a court of justice.

Ah! my dear, how little are we capable of judging what is best for us! The loss of my

my father I thought a heavy misfortune; but not for worlds would I have him alive now. Believe me, nothing contributes so much to reconcile me to present and future events, as the reflection that they cannot wound the bosom of a parent, who would keenly feel any degradation I must suffer, and perhaps reflect with bitterness on himself, although he was guided in his choice of Mr. Menville from the best and purest motives, the hope of aggrandizing his children, and preventing those dear objects of his love from feeling those painful sensibilities which a parent must experience in leaving orphans unprovided for. Convinced, therefore, that Providence orders every thing for the best, and that we short-sighted mortals are but ill judges of what is most conducive to our happiness, both here and hereafter, I kiss the rod of correction, and raise my mind above whatever evils it may be my portion to suffer.

And

And now, my dear Mrs. Bertie, I dispatch this letter immediately, that it may reach you equally as soon as the ill-natured reports in the papers, or the severer intelligence of private hands, who are too apt to multiply the failings of their friends.—Adieu, my beloved Charlotte, you will soon hear from me again; till when, believe me,

Your ever affectionate,

EMILY MENVILLE.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

MRS. COLEMORE TO MRS. MENVILLE.

STRANGE reports, my dearest friend, have reached us concerning Mr. Menville and Mrs. Thurkill. Mr. Colemore and myself are dying with anxiety. For Heaven's sake write me a line directly.

My father called at Mr. Shepherd's this morning: he was ill, and could not be seen; Mrs. Shepherd was particularly engaged. Tell me, my dear Mrs. Menville, shall Mr.
Colemore,

Colemore, shall I, or both of us come to town; command us instantly, if we can do you either service or pleasure. O! that diabolical girl! But I have time for no more. This goes by a private hand. If you are alive, write, write, I conjure you.

Your faithful

And afflicted,

E. M. COLEMORE.

LETTER

LETTER XX.

MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. COLEMORE.

YOUR letter, my beloved Mrs. Colemore, is this moment come to hand. How sensibly do I feel your kind concern for me. Rest assured I am perfectly well, indeed I am. Some disagreeable things have happened; and as affairs which concern two families are generally exaggerated, you shall have a faithful narrative from me in a day or two: meantime, believe that I am free from any present uneasiness. Mr. Menville is

is very kind, my sweet Emily perfectly well, and myself: with pleasure I assure you I need not tax the kindness of my friends to afford me any consolation. My best love to your respectable father, mother, and Mr. Colemore. I must be ever

Your obliged

And affectionate,

EMILY MENVILLE.

Lady Hartwill is with me every day, and expresses herself much attached to Mrs. Colemore.

LETTER

LETTER XXI.

MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. COLEMORE.

HOW quick the transitions in this life from one extreme to another! When I wrote my dear Mrs. Colemore last, I was comparatively a happy creature. What am I now! A prisoner in my own apartment, denied the sight of all who sympathized in my distress, and abandoned by my husband. Gracious God! support me; I do not repine, I do not murmur at thy decrees. Enable me to bear my lot with resignation and fortitude; no more I ask. And do you, my generous friends, sit in judgment

judgment on my actions; be candid, I conjure you; spare me not, if I have been guilty of error: I am open to conviction, and will follow your advice. Let me, if possible, retrace the occurrences of the three past days, which appear like a frightful dream, until I am sometimes awakened by fresh sorrows.

On Tuesday last Mr. Menville came into my dressing-room; he walked two or three turns, and seemed at a loss to begin. I looked at him in fearful silence: I saw his mind was agitated. At length he stopped: "Emily, I have a favour to request of you."

"Dear Sir, name your wish."

"Why, my dear, 'tis of a particular nature, and requires all your good sense and good nature to comply with. You know the unhappy situation of Mrs. Thurkill. (I started.) Traduced by her husband, rejected

by her parents, insulted by the unfeeling world, and without the present means of support, till the trial her husband brings forward is decided; her wretched situation has a claim upon my humanity and generosity, as I am considered answerable for her misfortunes."

He paused. I answered with energy, "Doubtless, Sir, *she has a claim* upon both, as an unhappy woman. God forbid I should narrow your heart, or entertain one sentiment of displeasure against the unfortunate. Relieve her, I beseech you; let her not have the sting of poverty added to self-reproach; let her be made independent, that she may not endure the weight of obligation for a small pittance."

He turned from me, again traversed the room, then, collecting more firmness, "I am not disappointed in my expectations of your generosity: but 'tis from *you* she must

receive

receive favours. In short, you must permit her to reside here in this house, and treat her as your friend."

"Reside here, in this *house*!" repeated I, with astonishment, "you cannot mean it, sure."

"I do mean it, and shall insist upon it, too; surely I have a right to bring whom I please to my own house."

"Undoubtedly, Sir, you have, if you can reconcile it to your own feelings to insult me, and incur the censure of the world."

"D—n the world! that is only a secondary consideration with me. Yet you may teach that world to respect her."

"I, Sir; I teach the world to respect a woman who has disgraced herself? Impossible. And *why* should I attempt it?"

“To oblige your husband,” said he, in a lower key, “to prove your superiority over your sex, to assist the unfortunate, and silence the rancorous tongues of envy and malice.”

“Pardon me, Mr. Menville, a step of that kind will only provoke the scandal you wish to avoid. If Mrs. Thurkill was to leave town for a short time, I should think it would be more prudent; and as, thanks to the follies of mankind, new subjects for censure and ridicule arise every day, in a week or two, or less perhaps, *her* particular share in it might be totally forgotten.”

“And that is your opinion, is it; and this is all the complaisance I am to expect from you, after paying you the compliment of requesting as a favour what I have a right to demand?”

“That you have an undoubted right, Sir, to introduce whatever person you please into
your

your house, I do not dispute, but I must be permitted to say, I know no power that can oblige *me* to associate with a woman whose character is lost in the world."

"You are wonderfully nice, indeed: it would be well if you were consistently so, if the visits of Lord Longfield were less frequent, and his attentions less noticed."

"It is unpardonable in you, Mr. Menville, to make such reflections, which you have too much candour and justice to credit. But, for Heaven's sake, let there be no disagreement between us; tell me how I can oblige you, and not forfeit my own character in the world, and I am ready to comply with your commands."

"I have already told you, Madam," said he, sternly, "that the opinion of the world I despise; but I owe a reparation to the woman, who suffers perhaps unjustly on my account: I have therefore invited her to re-

sider for some time in my house ; her being your guest will at least give her credit, and suspend the remarks of the ill-natured and malicious."

" *If you have* invited Mrs. Thurkill to your house, Sir ; *if she* is hardy enough to enter it, and reside here, I must confess I have neither courage nor inclination to face *her*. She will not, therefore, be *my* guest ; for the rest you must do as you please."

" 'Tis well, Madam," answered he, haughtily, " you will find *I shall* do so. I am only sorry I condescended to ask as a favour what I am authorized to command."

He left the room, and I remained overcome with surprise and vexation for near two hours, incapable of fixing on any plan for my conduct. The noise of a carriage at the door made me go to the window. Judge what were my feelings when I saw Mr. Menville hand Mrs. Thurkill into the house.

I sunk

I sunk back in my chair; a violent burst of tears prevented me from fainting. Norton just then entered the room, with all the marks of astonishment in her face. "Lord, Madam! my master has brought home Mrs. Thurkill."

"Well, Norton," said I, trying to recover myself, "is there any thing surprising in Mrs. Thurkill's coming here?"

"O! my dear lady, to be sure you are an angel, you bear every thing; but indeed, Ma'am, every servant in the house knows what a wicked woman she is; besides, Madam, we all see the papers, and there every thing is told, nothing is a secret; and now to come here again. O, what a vile creature she must be."

"Pray, Norton, don't talk in this manner: I must insist upon it, every person in this house treats Mrs. Thurkill with respect."

She turned from me, her eyes full. I heard her mutter, "Impossible!" With as much composure as possible I dressed for dinner. At the usual hour a servant came to acquaint me dinner was on the table. I asked if there was any company.

"Only Mrs. Thurkill, Madam."

"Go then with my compliments to your master and the lady; tell them I am not well to-day, and shall be glad to have a plate of any thing sent to my dressing-room."

The man withdrew.—No laws, human or divine, thought I, can surely oblige me to sit at table with a woman so infamous, who must be devoid of shame and sensibility, to enter this house with such effrontery.

In a short time Norton came in, followed by a servant with a boiled chicken, without any message whatever. I eat what I could: my heart was too full to require much food.

About

About seven o'clock Mr. Menville came up. I trembled. "Your behaviour, Madam, is insupportable. You may think your disobedience to my wishes, and rudeness to a lady, are perhaps meritorious; but I must tell you plainly, if you will not see *my* friends, you shall not see *your's*, and I shall give orders accordingly."

"As you please, Sir," I replied, with an assumed composure; "those friends I call mine would doubtless desert me voluntarily, could I be guilty of the meanness you require. Hear me, Sir, with patience: had you brought the poorest girl of character to your table, or as an inmate, you would have found me obedient to every wish you could express. Since the first hour I gave you my hand, I have lived but to please you: but there are bounds even in the duty from a wife to her husband, to give a sanction to infamy, to be a companion, a mean servile companion to a woman, who, conscious of the injuries she has done me, must

despise and triumph over me. No, Sir; if such are your expectations, I must say, I neither can nor will comply with them. What right has she to expect I should forfeit the esteem of my friends, and my own approbation, to oblige her?"

"Say no more, Madam," cried he. "I shall cut the matter very short. Since you don't chuse to eat with me, you must have your solitary meals here: and there is one thing in which your scrupulous, your partial duty *must* obey me."

"Name it, Sir."

"That you do not presume to go out of this house, or see any company, without my leave."

"I promise you, Sir, strictly to obey you."

He walked fullenly out of the room.—
Norton came and informed me general or-

ders were given that I was not at home to any body. I made no comments. Yesterday they were at Richmond; this day they are again gone out. My eyes followed them, and my tears would flow, yet I endeavour to repress them for my dear child's sake, who seems entirely forgotten by her cruel father.

Surely never was such a strange infatuation, such an uncommon step, as to bring that woman here to brave the world, and confirm her infamy! Could they not be contented with residing at a distance! Was it necessary to humble and mortify me! What have I done to deserve it! Did I not, from the moment I assented to my father's wishes; did I not from that moment devote the whole attention of my mind to study Mr. Menville's pleasure; did I ever cease in every expression of affection and gratitude, for his kindness to me and mine, that an affectionate and obliged heart could dictate! O! no, I can acquit myself; I feel no self-reproach from the neglect of any duties. Let me then, by patience and resignation,

K 6

signation, convince Mr. Menville I merit better treatment; and his justice will one day render me back that affection which a temporary madness has deprived me of.

To you, my dear Mrs. Colemore, Mr. Colemore, to your respectable parents, I appeal; by your judgment I will direct mine. Let me know, without delay, how far I have conducted myself right; and if I have erred, I will endeavour to retrace my steps, and pursue a different path. I cannot address Mrs. Bertie in my present situation; but to you I will constantly write; it will be one of my greatest pleasures.—Adieu, my dear Mrs. Colemore. God bless all you love and honour.

Your affectionate,

EMILY MENVILLE.

I beg and entreat Mr. Colemore may not by any method, directly nor indirectly, apply to Mr. Menville. Time will do every thing.

LETTER

LETTER XXII.

MRS. COLEMORE TO MRS. MENVILLE.

MY dear, amiable, and much-injured friend, your letter has made us all miserable; but do not you be unhappy; virtue and goodness like your's is Heaven's peculiar care: doubt not but your trials will turn out gloriously for you. My father bids me say every thing that is respectful and affectionate for him. He says you have conducted yourself with the highest degree of propriety. The duty and respect you owe to.

to your own character justifies you in refusing to comply with Mr. Menville's request, of being an associate with infamy. Go on then, my dear friend, in following the dictates of your own judgment, be assured you cannot err; a mind uniformly good must always act rightly.

What effrontery, indeed, must that creature have, to enter your house, and court your presence; and how can it be possible Mr. Menville, who could admire you for your virtues, can be enamoured of one so directly the reverse? But the infatuation will not last long, be assured it will not.

This morning we were surprised to hear Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd are going to leave Sudbury, and reside at Boulogne, and he is accordingly disposing of all his effects. It is an odd step. I cannot think delicacy, or mortification at their daughter's baseness, has suggested it: they have more substantial reasons, I believe; and I much fear your husband.

band will suffer more ways than one by this artful, worthless family. Yet I will not anticipate evils.

I could write volumes, my dear Mrs. Menville, in your praise, and in execrations against the wretch who has interrupted your domestic happiness; but my spirits are so agitated, and my hand trembles so much from indignation, that I must conclude, with only assuring you, that you have the most perfect admiration of this family, who find it impossible to direct good sense and a heart like your's. Pursue steadily the path you have chosen; you cannot be directed to a better. Mr. Colemore will observe all your commands; but remember, if his assistance can ever be useful, he will rejoice to be *active* in obeying them. Believe me, with admiration and respect,

Your faithful

And affectionate,

E. M. COLEMORE.

You

You must not chide me, but I could not repress the inclination I felt to acquaint Lady Hartwill with your present situation. She loves you, and must be uneasy. I have communicated in confidence, therefore you need not be apprehensive.

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

ROBERT MARTIN, ESQ.

TO JOHN CHAMBERS, ESQ.

WHAT will be the end of this business I know not, but the devil has put the strangest scheme into Menville's head sure that ever was formed; he has actually carried Thurkill's abandoned wife home to his house, denies his own to all company, and publicly drives about with his mistress. Did't ever hear of such an extraordinary step? Upon my soul I could kill the fellow for behaving so ill to such a woman!

man! Some way or other I *will* see her, if I am obliged to visit his despicable paramour, and court her favour. The town talks of nothing else but Menville's shutting up his wife, and placing his mistress at the head of his table. The man is either mad or a fool to act in such an absurd manner. But it is near their dinner-hour; I will drop in as if by chance.

12 at night.

Oh! Jack, I have such a scene to relate: never surely was there such another woman! But I will not anticipate: take things in order as follows:

Between four and five I strolled into Bedford Square, and as luck would have it, before I had got six yards towards the house, was overtaken by Menville himself.

"Ah! Martin," cried he, looking a little confused, "where are you going?"

"Why,

"Why, faith, I intended calling in, and taking my mutton at your house, if I found you at home."

"We are luckily met then; but," said he, smiling, "do you know an old acquaintance is at my house?"

"What you mean Mrs. Thurkill," answered I, carelessly. "Yes, yes, every body knows what a happy fellow you are, a wife and a mistress in one house. You manage devilish clever to keep them together without pulling caps."

"O! you give me more credit than I deserve. The truth is, my stately wife has shut herself up in her own apartment, and does not condescend to honour us with her company."

"Natural enough," returned I, carelessly; "few women like rivals."

We

We now came to the door. I entered, and was introduced to Mrs. Thurkill. With all her assurance, she blushed as I drew near, and muttered some words I could not understand. Dinner was served up, the lady took the head of the table. I could not help venting some inward curses at her impudence. I found they were going to the play. I stayed till they went off, followed them, resisted all their intreaties to make a trio, and within ten minutes after the coach drew off, returned to the house.

"I have left something in the drawing-room," said I to the porter, "and shall write a letter in your master's library."

I passed him, and run up stairs. I proceeded directly to Mrs. Menville's dressing-room, and tapped at the door.—"Come in," said a low voice.

I turned the lock, and entered: she started, her face in a glow.

"Mr.

“ Mr. Martin !”

“ Pardon me, Madam,” stammered I, in some confusion, “ pardon me for this intrusion.”

“ I know not, Sir,” answered she, “ by whose permission you took the liberty to enter into my apartment ; but I am not just now in a situation to receive visitors ; am very far from being well, and therefore must decline the honour you intend me.”

She arose to ring the bell. I caught her hand.

“ Hear me, Madam, for a few minutes.”

“ Excuse me, Sir,” endeavouring to withdraw her hand ; “ particular circumstances in which I am involved, will not permit me to receive the visits of any gentlemen in the absence of Mr. Menville.”

“ I know,

“ I know, Madam, your situation,” cried I, with eagerness, “ I know you are infamouslly treated, that an unworthy woman usurps your place: and will you suffer such indignities tamely? Will you not permit a man devoted to your service to rescue you from a yoke so shamefully laid on? Will you not retaliate on wretches who destroy your peace of mind? I am devoted to your service: my life, my fortune are in your hands, dispose of them as you please. Whatever are your commands, I live but to obey you.”

She had thrown herself into a chair. I uttered all I said with such rapidity, as precluded all interruption. When I stopt, she looked at me, and with a smile of ineffable disdain, “ These then are the friendships of men of the world. *You*, Sir, are a *friend* of my husband's; you force yourself into my presence; you offer yourself as my avenger; you persuade me to retaliate supposed injuries. Good Heaven! how depraved are men!

men ! But you are mistaken in the outset of this business, Sir; I have no injuries to complain of; I want no avenger; *I have a husband*, consequently no man's life or fortune are necessary to me. It is my wish to be exempt from company for some time; I am accountable to no one for my reasons. I do not admit my own particular friends; of course my husband's associates have no right to be offended, if included in a general order."

She again tried to get at the bell: I respectfully prevented her. "Deign for one moment to hear me, Madam, and *I will leave you*. I know you will suffer a thousand insults and humiliations; I know also Mr. Menville has lost immense sums at play; that the connexions he has formed will ruin him, and you will be involved in the general wreck. Only remember in me you have a friend, who would die to save you from pain and disgrace."

She

She interrupted me. "Suffer me, Mr. Martin, to interrupt you. My character you have entirely mistaken: *I am a wife*, Sir. Whatever may be my husband's fate, I will share it with him; nor shrink from any troubles he is involved in: added to this, I am a mother. These sacred characters, the duties they imprint on my mind, shall ever regulate my conduct through life. I wish to believe myself obliged to your kind attention, Sir, because I should be sorry to think any man so depraved, so abandoned in principle, as to insult a woman he thinks defenceless and unhappy."

I was struck dumb, Jack; never did the angel look so much like a divinity as now. I looked, I gazed, I trembled, and adored. "Far be it from me, Madam, to insult you," I replied, after some hesitation; "whatever were my ambitious hopes when I entered this house, you have entirely subdued them: I leave you with different ideas, I own, but with increased respect and admiration. Were
all

all women like you, men would be rational and happy beings. Henceforth I will be a true and disinterested friend, ever ready to promote your happiness, and to respect your situation. Pardon this intrusion, which never will be repeated without your permission."

"Now," cried the angel, with a smile of inexpressible sweetness, "now I see a right principle breaking from the follies and fashion of the day. Encourage it, Mr. Martin, for your own sake: believe me, you will find more real satisfaction from one approving thought, one just and generous action, than any other gratifications could afford you: and whenever Mr. Menville introduces Mr. Martin as *his friend*, I shall be most ready to acknowledge him as mine also."

With a profound bow, unable to utter a word, I took my leave.

Tell me, Jack, do you believe such another woman is in being? Laugh at me, if you please; but, upon my soul, I believe I shall reform; for I would sooner be *esteemed* by her, cold as the word is, than *loved* by any other woman. The few words of approbation that fell from her lips, the heavenly smile that accompanied them, spoke volumes to my heart. I will be all she wishes me to be, her zealous friend; and every scheme I can devise shall be to punish the infamous woman that insults and shuts her up from the world.

Henceforth you will hear of me as a new man. I detest my former vices and follies. I will cultivate the acquaintance of Lord Longfield and Lady Hartwill; through them I may yet be of service to this charming creature. 'Tis evident from the impressions I have received, that women, lovely women, may make us what they please. No man would be a villain, if that captivating sex would
but

but respect themselves. But I am a traitor to the cause, though a convert myself: I must not betray my friends; yet, Chambers, *there is* a fascination in virtue; the greatest libertine must acknowledge it, and *I am* convinced of it. Adieu for the present.

ROBERT MARTIN.

LETTER

L 2

LETTER XXIV.

CAPTAIN HARLEY TO MISS ELLIS.

I STILL address you, my sweet friend, by the name of Ellis, though probably by this time that name is lost in one more dear to you. If so, accept my warmest congratulations; and may the happiness you so well deserve ever be your portion.

When I wrote you last, I thought myself settled for some time; but poor Mr. Neville has had a relapse; he is certainly consumptive;

tive; and Mrs. Neville is also in a very indifferent state of health. We have therefore determined to take a journey to Spa; and as we shall travel by short easy stages, I hope they will derive both benefit and pleasure from the expedition. Their excess of gratitude makes me uneasy; for, after all, what are their obligations? The trifling services I can render them in pecuniary matters are greatly over-balanced by the pleasure I receive in their company, and the delightful reflection of having preserved them from despair and death. I have assured them their children shall be my peculiar care, and I will adopt them for my own. I shall never marry, and have no relations that can make any claims on me, either by affinity or want of assistance; consequently I cannot better dispose of the fortune generosity bestowed than in relieving the unfortunate: I consider it a debt incumbent on me to pay, and not as bestowing obligations.

And now, my good friend, permit me to thank you for all your kind communications. I impatiently expect your next packets, that I may know the life of the dearest and best of women is out of danger. My anxieties are not to be expressed: her health and happiness engross all my wishes. Some attachments of a similar nature, when deprived of hope, may be subdued, but mine never can; since it is those virtues which she hourly practises; it is the warm friend, the dutiful daughter, the affectionate wife, the generous, humane feelings; it is, in short, a mind which angels may view with delight, inclosed in a form every one must admire, that is imprinted on my heart, never, never to be erased. Happy Menville! to have the power of adding to the felicity of such a woman!

Clayton has written to England, to make some enquiry about Mr. and Mrs. Neville's family. They have also wrote to Mr. and Mrs. Wellford, from whom they have not heard these three years. The uncertain fate
of

of poor Frances gives them much uneasiness. For my own part, I should rather be inclined to think her dead than alive; and indeed, in her situation, it appears impossible she could have got off unknown, or remain concealed in the neighbourhood, much less that she could have settled elsewhere. I rather conclude she threw herself into the river, But of this no more. If your letters arrive, they will be forwarded to me; and the moment we are settled at Spa, I shall write. Adieu, my amiable friend. Present my best respects to your worthy parents; also to the gentleman who is honoured with your approbation. I trust he will not deprive me of my charming correspondent, as I can nowhere repair the loss I should in that case sustain. Believe me, with truth and sincerity,

Dear Madam,

Your ever obliged,

FREDERIC HARLEY.

L 4

LETTER

LETTER XXV.

MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. COLEMORE.

A WHOLE week has past, my dear friend, without any alteration in my situation: I have not seen Mr. Menville; and your kind letter is the only consolation I have received, except the caresses of my sweet infant. I have this instant been honoured with a letter from Lady Hartwill, in consequence of your communications. She is highly provoked at Mr. Menville's conduct, and thinks I am *too submissive*. She says

says she will present herself every day at my door, in the hope of meeting Mr. Menville, or obtaining admittance, and requests I will exert more spirit, and *insist* upon seeing my friends.

I am much obliged to her Ladyship for the kind interest she takes in my vexations; but as to exerting more spirit, what would it avail me, but to provoke my husband's displeasure, and afford him a pretext to use me ill. No, my dear, it is the duty of a wife to be submissive, in points which affect not her honour or reputation: there only she has a right to resist, and *there* I exerted myself with as much resolution as I could assume, and shall persevere: in every other point he has a claim to my obedience; and I will at least have the merit of a patient sufferer.

The trial is come, my dear Mrs. Colemore, and my boasted fortitude is put to the proof. You shall find I will not shrink from my hard fate, but prove for once that

theory and practice are inseparable in a mind resolved.

Mr. Menville has just left me. The purport of his visit was as follows: "The situation which your perverseness has placed me in, Madam, is so extremely disagreeable, I can bear it no longer: you must therefore leave this house. (I started with terror.) I have an estate in Cornwall, which I purchased some time ago. There is an old mansion-house on it, tolerably furnished. A bailiff, a woman-servant, and a boy live in it, which are as many servants as you will want, except, indeed, you choose to take a girl to wait on you."

Astonishment and terror had kept me silent till now, when I exclaimed, "What, Sir, am I not permitted then to take Norton with me?"

"No, Madam, I absolutely exclude her: your nurse-maid may go to attend the child.

And

And I must tell you, I expect you should maintain yourself and servants you take from the liberal allowance I made you on my marriage for pin-money, but which now must procure you the necessaries of life. The wife who disputes her husband's pleasure, has no right to expect indulgence from him."

I could no longer restrain my tears; they flowed in abundance.

"Tears are ridiculous, mere female artifice, which can make no impression upon me. If you are disposed to comply with my wishes, say so at once; if not, prepare for your journey."

Indignation now took place of sorrow. "Your alternative, Sir, requires no deliberation. I will preserve my honour, my character untainted for *my own* sake; not, Sir, from respect to a man who can so cruelly sacrifice an unoffending wife, consign her and

his child to solitude and comparative poverty, without a single cause on her side that can justify such treatment. I am ready, therefore, to prepare for my journey."

"It is well, Madam; the day after tomorrow the carriage will be at the door by seven o'clock. I will write immediately, to prepare Bailey for your reception." Saying this, he flung out of the room.

Well, my dear Mrs. Colemore, do you not approve of my spirit? Believe me, I will endeavour to deserve the good opinion of my partial friends, by my fortitude in bearing inevitable evils.—What part of Cornwall I am to inhabit, I know not: but, as I do not suppose he will have the cruelty to prohibit my writing, you shall very soon be informed. As to living upon my yearly allowance, it gives me not a moment's thought; it will be amply sufficient for all my wants. My chief concern is to part with poor Norton; but I cannot help it, and

I hope she will soon get a better place. I shall take the liberty to refer her to you for a character: she is a very worthy creature, and I know will be grieved at leaving me. I do not like my nurse-maid *very* much; but, as Mr. Menville mentioned her going, I *will* take her: I suppose I may be at liberty to part with her hereafter, if she behaves improperly.

And now, my beloved friends, with a thousand good wishes for your uninterrupted happiness, I close up my correspondence from London. If you do not hear from me within a fortnight, be not uneasy; depend upon it I shall do very well, even should I be debarred what is now the chief comfort of my life, a correspondence with you, which yet, I hope, will not be the case. God bless my dear Mrs. Colemore, prays,

Her truly affectionate,

EMILY MENVILLE.

Norton

Norton is just come up. She tells me, her master's valet reported in the kitchen, that he and his master should leave England in a fortnight;—Mrs. Thurkill, too, I suppose. Oh! my dear, surely, surely it is hard; but I must learn to bear.

LETTER

LETTER XXVI.

ROBERT MARTIN, ESQ.

TO JOHN CHAMBERS, ESQ.

CURSE upon that infamous wretch and her infatuated paramour! What think ye, Jack, they have driven that lovely woman from her house; yes, Mrs. Menville is gone, I know not where. This morning I called at the door: the porter told me his master was not at home, and his lady gone out of town. "What, to Sudbury?" questioned I. "No, Sir, a great way off, above

above two hundred miles, I heard Mrs. Norton say."

"Mrs. Norton is gone with her, I suppose."—"No, Sir; she was discharged the same day my lady set off; only the nurse-maid and Miss Emily went with her."

"And you don't know the name of the place?"—"No, Sir."

"Nor where Mrs. Norton lives?"—"No, Sir."

"Well, I shall call on your master to-morrow."

I walked off, called at Lady Hartwill's; they were equally surprised and vexed, but had no intelligence. I then fauntered into Hyde Park; I met Lord Longfield on horse-back; I repeated the above to him; he was greatly affected.

"Menville

"Menville behaves very ill," said he; "he has certainly driven her away through the instigation of that worthless woman he is connected with. However, I hope she is with her friends, and that we shall shortly hear she is in a more eligible situation than exposed to their insults."

He rode off; I pursued my walk, when I happened to meet Jack Williams. "So, Martin," cried he, "what moralizing on the follies of the great world around you, or waiting a summons from some kind fair one?"

"Neither," replied I, smiling; "my thoughts were turned on a far distant spot, in all probability, and I am equally insensible to the locality of the place, or the objects that surround me."

"Poor Martin!" exclaimed Williams, "why thou art far gone, indeed, *in la belle passion*; but you are devilish secret; come, let me know who is your Helen."

"When

"When I have found her," returned I, "you shall know: at present I have no secrets to reveal."

"Ah! you are a sly dog," cried he: "but what a cursed piece of work your friend Menville has made with his amour. He is pretty well done up, I hear, has sent his wife among the tin-mines in Cornwall, and is preparing to go abroad with Mrs. Thurkill."

"Mrs. Menville gone to Cornwall!" said I; "where did you pick up that intelligence?"

"From my servant, who is brother to Menville's valet."

"Dear Jack," cried I, eagerly, "for Heaven's sake employ your servant to learn, if possible, where Mrs. Menville resides: I will make the fellow's fortune, if he succeeds."

"O!

"O! your servant," said Williams; "my good friend Martin, you have no secrets, to be sure; but we can see which way the needle points in the compass: yet have a care; a married woman under her circumstances is delicately situated, and ought to be doubly respected."

"Fear not, Jack: I swear to you I would not injure Mrs. Menville for the world: I *do* respect her, and will serve her at the hazard of my life."

Williams stared at me as if he could scarce give me credit, but assured me he would endeavour to obtain further intelligence."

Leaving Hyde Park, I strolled down to White's. Major Fermor was there. "Pray, Mr. Martin, is it true your friend Menville is parted from his wife? I heard last night, he had sent her down to an old castle, on the sea-coast, in Cornwall."

"I af-

"I assure you I know nothing of the matter," replied I; "I hear she is gone out of town; but I see very little of Menville."

"I think," resumed the Major, "he is in the high road to ruin: 'tis said he has lost immense sums at pharo; in all probability Thurkill will recover pretty considerable damages, and he will have the lady to support at no small expence, I dare say."

"I am sorry for him," said I, carelessly.

"I am sorry for his wife," returned he; "for they say she is a very amiable woman."

Thus, you see, the happiness and fortune of the family are likely to be entirely destroyed by an insidious female. — I am now going in search of Williams, for I can think of nothing but Mrs. Menville and her injuries.

Well, Jack, I am now on the wing for Cornwall, though, faith, I know not what I
am

am to do there: but here I cannot stay. —Last night I obtained the wished-for intelligence. Menville's valet is much in his master's secrets: a lucky circumstance for me. Mrs. Menville is at a castle called Trewarn, on the sea-coast, about five miles from Penzance, and almost opposite Scilly. Next week Menville and his woman (O, how I hate her!) will set off for the Continent, previous to the trial. All this is a great secret. Perhaps you may see the delectable pair in Paris: I wish them both at the devil with all my heart. To-morrow I set off for Cornwall: I know nothing of the country; but when I am settled, you shall hear from me again. Williams has promised me his correspondence; and thro' the means of his servant, I shall have every intelligence I wish for: I have made it worth the fellow's while to oblige me. Believe me on all occasions,

Dear Jack,

Your's most faithfully,

ROBERT MARTIN.

LETTER

LETTER XXVII.

MRS. BERTIE TO MRS. MENVILLE.

HOW truly kind and attentive in you, my dearest friend, to write, and enable me to support the astonishing news which met my eye the very same day your letter arrived. My grief, my indignation are not to be expressed; yet you are still an angel, can bear injuries with patience, and vindicate the wretches who have wronged you. Good Heavens! what a strong mind is your's. You say, "It is only a temporary

porary alienation of Mr. Menville's affection, and that he is *very kind* to you. Kind, indeed! Is there any merit in his behaviour, when you receive him with tenderness, and avoid even a reproachful look? But let me not offend you by reflections you will not permit. Since your lot is drawn, you will have an opportunity, my charming Emily, of proving your worth and fortitude. Grant Heaven, your trials may be short, and that Mr. Menville may every day grow more sensible of your merit.

We have been at Spa only three days, after a tedious journey, for going through Paris is a round-about way, and the roads are so indifferent, and the accommodations so bad, that really to those who have only been accustomed to the roads in England, every thing puts you in an ill-humour, especially when you have valetudinarians with you. However, here we are; and I am already much pleased with this place. I hear there are many English families of fashion here,
and

and more expected. The situation of our lodgings is delightful, and the terms remarkably reasonable.

I have been teased into a promise of giving my hand to Sir Charles within this month; yet I am sure I have little encouragement to do so, when I reflect, that the most deserving woman in the world cannot keep the affections of a man who once appeared to be the most affectionate of husbands. In short, I am out of humour with the whole sex but my uncle: he is really a valuable character; and it is with grief I see his health declining fast: I fear no change of climate will be found beneficial to him.

You judge with your usual good sense, my dear Mrs. Menville, how little capable we are of knowing what is best for us; and that consideration should enable us to bear disappointments, which often cloud our happiest prospects, with resignation: but yet there are some evils which lay hold of the heart,

heart, and which all our fortitude is unable to support at the time. I speak from experience; the sting of self-reproach, a consciousness of deserving the misfortunes which overwhelm us, is a situation so deplorable, so mortifying, as scarce any bosom of sensibility can support with any tolerable patience. From such insupportable reflections, my dear Mrs. Menville, you are happily free, and may look forward with hopes that your virtues, however severely tried for a time, will undoubtedly meet their just reward. I shall most impatiently expect your next letter: grant kind Heaven, that *your* happiness may be restored, or I shall have very little inclination to change the name of

Your ever affectionate,

And faithful,

C. BERTIE.

My uncle, aunt, and Sir Charles beg their best respects; they are equally anxious and uneasy with myself. Hasten to us good news, pray.

LETTER XXVIII

MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. COLEMORE.

I AM now safely lodged within my prison walls; such I may call it, since I have received an intimation that this castle is to be the boundary of my walks: I shall most strictly observe the injunction. I am told this house is about five miles from a great post town, and no restraint has been ordered on my letters; therefore I hope to enjoy the correspondence of my friends.

We were four days on our journey, the last day through a country bleak and barren,

with a number of tin-mines; every thing had a frightful and solitary appearance. When I arrived near the castle, the sea, at a little distance, was rough and foaming, the rain poured in torrents, whilst the roughness of the roads, and the very high winds whistling round our ears, and almost drowning the noise of the wheels, added horror to the distress of my mind. I looked at my child, then in a sweet sleep; tears involuntarily flowed from my eyes. I turned my eyes on Ann, the maid, who supported her: she was unmoved; there was an expression in her countenance that surprised me; a confidence and an air of triumph, I thought: yet why should she triumph! her situation is unpleasant enough: I must banish the idea.

At length we arrived at the castle; a long dark avenue of trees led to it; the walls were high; a large gate-way opened into a court, where the castle stood, an old irregular building in front, with very small windows, and a tower at each end, with a sort of bat-

lements on the top. A great bell at the gate, which the coachman rang, (for I was not permitted to have a footman,) brought out the master of the castle, whose name is Bailey; he bowed with some respect, preceded the carriage to the inner door, and assisted me into the house. We entered a large old-fashioned hall, and I was shewn into a spacious parlour, the furniture of which had been yellow damask, but the colour was almost entirely gone; and some of the high-backed chairs were rather the worse for time. A decent-looking woman made her appearance, and asked what I would please to have for supper. "She had a nice fowl in the house, should she roast it?" I answered in the affirmative. Bailey then told me, "We have orders, Madam, to obey you in every thing within the castle; but master desires you may not go beyond the castle-wall and gardens; therefore I hope your Ladyship wont be offended to find all the doors locked."

"By

"By no means," I replied; "you must do your duty. I came here to enjoy solitude, and have no wish to exceed the limits of the gardens."

The man looked pleased.

"Lord!" cries Ann, "and must I be kept a prisoner too?"

"Not a prisoner," said Bailey; "there is a great deal of ground belonging to the house, and you have a fine view of the sea from the terrace, and can see the ships pass very near."

She muttered something, and turning to me, "Shall I see about the beds, Madam?"

"I will accompany you," answered I.

Accordingly we ascended a large oak staircase, the stairs brown and shining, so as to make it dangerous, without holding by the

banister, to walk up or down. The woman, whose name is Grace, shewed me into a gallery, and opened a door, which led to a suite of three large and lofty rooms. The furniture had been rich, but was gone much to decay; and the beds were remarkably high, and all made of oak, shining like the stairs, and carved with the figures of birds and beasts. In short, the whole had a very gloomy and melancholy appearance: it chilled my heart, but I said nothing. Ann was loud in expressing her discontent; so much so, that Grace cried out, "Sure, if Madam don't complain, I think, Mistress, you need not grumble. Some of the finest gentlefolks in the county have lived here; and it is the grandest house for a good way round; aye, by many a mile, so it is."

The wind, which had been very high all day, had increased greatly; it now rattled all the windows, roared in the great wide chimnies; and, in short, made such a tremendous noise, that it really inspired me with horror.

I walked

I walked into the apartment intended for my dressing-room; and going to the windows, had a view of the sea, which was the most awful sight I had ever beheld. The waves rose to an amazing height, and came foaming towards the shore with a terrible noise: the sky looked black, and all the coast round barren, desolate, and rocky. I turned from a scene which added new terrors to my soul; and having given orders about the linen and other necessaries, I returned to the parlour, which, gloomy as it really was, appeared comfortable in comparison to the rooms above. I eat my solitary supper, and reluctantly prepared for bed at eleven o'clock. My sweet Emily appeared not the worse for the fatigue of travelling, and, with her maid, slept in an adjoining room. The whistling of the wind, the roar of the sea, and a heavy rain, which beat against the windows, were but too much in unison with my mind, and precluded all inclination to rest. About seven in the morning I dropped into a doze, which was soon interrupted by a frightful

dream, that threw me into a fit of trembling, and I awaked under every impresson of horror. Bell there was none, and I began to remember I had no woman to assist me, I therefore got up, and was putting on my clothes, when Ann came into my room. "Lord, Ma'am, are you going to dress yourself?"

"Yes, Ann, I have no servant now to dress me."

"I can assist you, Ma'am."

"No, I wish to accustom myself to what necessity has imposed upon me: I will therefore do every thing I *can* for myself. I only request your care of my dearest child."

She left the room, and I soon got on my clothes. I see in this trifling instance how easily we accommodate ourselves to indulgencies, and multiply artificial wants. Before I was married, I never had a servant to dress

dress me: my mother always made it a rule I should do every thing for myself about my own person. After I became the wife of Mr. Menville, things were different, and I readily fell in with the establishment he made, and found it a pleasant thing to be attended; yet I did not give more fatigue to my woman than I could help. Now, see the difference; no sooner was I deprived of a femme de chambre, than I felt great difficulties in doing things for myself. Ann assisted me in the journey, because she slept in the same room: but the morning after my arrival here, I found it very awkward to dress myself. Thus, it is very evident, we create wants for ourselves, and feel inconveniencies which a small exertion might enable us to remove.

I am now more reconciled to my situation. Bailey is very civil, Grace very attentive to my orders, the view of the sea is grown familiar to me, and I generally sit in my dressing-room. The grounds are ex-

tenfive. There is a lawn behind the house, which has a terrace on the side, which looks towards the sea, and a pleasant dry walk. There are two large and good gardens; also a very fine orchard, which they say is seven acres. In short, there is room enough for exercise and amusement, to a mind at ease, and where you are not sensible you *must not* go beyond certain limits. The mind, my dear Mrs. Colemore, is refractory, and scorns to be confined.

I have this day written a short letter to Mrs. Bertie; and without saying a syllable of Mr. Menville's conduct, merely told her I was well, and with my family removed to this castle, promising to write her more fully another day. Should my situation be known, and noised abroad in the world, which it *never shall* by me; should she hear of it, at least she will be satisfied of my health; and I endeavoured to raise my spirits, and write cheerfully.

I have

I have now been here five days. Every thing is uniformly the same. If, by any means, you can learn how Mr. Menville disposes of himself, it would, I own be a gratification to me; but let not Mr. Colemore, by any means, appear to be curious, or draw observation by his enquiries. Nothing could give me equal pain to the idea of his being involved in any disagreeable situation by his kindness to me.—Heaven bless you, my dear Mrs. Colemore, and all you love and honour.

I am ever

Your affectionate,

EMILY MENVILLE.

LETTER XXIX.

ROBERT MARTIN, ESQ.

TO JOHN CHAMBERS, ESQ.

WELL, my friend, here I am in this remote part of the world, after a thousand hair-breadth escapes; a cursed rugged road and dreary prospects, except now and then you stumble on some good family mansions. Yet this country abounds in riches, and the tin mines are an inexhaustible source of wealth to the proprietors, where they turn out productive. I am now within a mile and a half of Trewarn Castle; no nearer accommodations could I obtain, and these

these I have are bad enough; my landlord, whose name is Tregegle, is concerned in the pilchard fishery, and I was compelled to listen a full hour to the whole process of the business, before I could obtain any account of Trewarn Castle. At length my patience was rewarded with the following intelligence.

“ Lack-a-day, fir, the castle was once a fine place, and belonged, time out of mind, to the Penrickard family; but the last good Sir William went to London, and brought down a fine town madam, with a mort of pride, but no money; so when her came here, her wouldn't see the tenants, nor visit the Squires wives; so then every body hated her, and so then she would go back to London, and sure enough she made the good Sir William go along too; sure and sure, there wasn't a dry eye in the parish, when he was lugged away. I was but a youngster then, fir, for 'tis thirty years ago they went away, and there madam played such pranks in the great city, that in about ten years or so, they were

were all ruined, and so this estate of Tre-warne, sir, was sold to one and then to another, but no gentlefolks ever came to live in it; the grounds are all let to farmers, and now it belongs to a great India man, worth a power of money, they say, but he has never been here, so the castle has nobody in it but two servants."

"Pray," said I, when this tale was finished, "pray do you know the servants?"

"Bless you, master, why I knows Will. Bailey, who has the care of the place, as well as myself; I ha'n't seen'em for this week past, but he often calls here."

"I should like to know that person, for very like the great India man may have no objection to sell the estate, and I want to buy one in this neighbourhood."

"Oh! please God, master, you shall see'en when he comes, I wishes with all my heart

heart some great family would live there, it would be a main good thing for the neighbourhood."

I have walked this day twice round the walls, and the gardens which are very near the sea, but have not seen any body, man nor woman. You may suppose I do not appear exactly as Bob Martin, Esq. no, no, I am a middle aged plain dressed man, and have borrowed thy name Jack, so I am Mr. Chambers, at your service. My fellow is faithful I know, and I am sure will make no discoveries. If I can get acquainted with this Bailey, and can find entrance into the house, it shall go hard but I will see the angel. Heavens! what a dreary place, I am really in the horrors myself, though I do not repent my Quixotic expedition, if I can be of service to my divine princess, now confined in the enchanted castle. What servants she has with her, I know not, only the nurse maid left town with her, but doubtless she has some person to attend her
here,

here. 'Tis plain her abode in Cornwall is kept very secret, since Bailey has not communicated it to his friend Tregegle, I therefore ask but few questions, that I may give no cause for suspicion.

Jack, I have seen Mrs. Menville; this morning I was sauntering round the garden walls, when I saw a woman, whom I knew to be her, walking slowly on a terrace, as I suppose it must be; I debated with myself whether I should make myself known or not. On second thoughts, I conceived it would be better to write a line, I therefore contented myself with straining my eyes after the charming creature, without seeing her face, for her bonnet was drawn over it; I have accordingly wrote, and as it is a fine evening, perhaps she may be induced to take another solitary walk. If you write, direct for William Chambers, Esq. to be left at the Post-Office, Penzance, Cornwall,

Your's, faithfully,

ROBERT MARTIN.

LETTER XXX.

MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. COLEMORE.

MY dearest friend; what will become of me? I have this day received the following letter from Mr. Menville, I copy it, let it speak for itself.

Madam,

Compelled by your unaccountable caprice and little complaisance to the wishes of your husband, to act in many respects different from my intentions, you have only yourself to
 thank

thank for all the disagreeable consequences of your obstinacy ; therefore, without any ceremony I must inform you, my affairs are in a very deranged state ; that I have been obliged to mortgage some of my estates, and sell others for present supply. The one at Sudbury is encumbered with your settlement, as well as bound for the payment of your present annual allowance. That allowance you will enjoy for your life ; I do not therefore see any cause why I should lose present advantages to myself, and secure future ones to a person that has too plainly proved she had no affection for me, I therefore, madam, am under the necessity of requiring you to give up that settlement my imprudent fondness made you. My solicitor will wait on you in a few days, to direct you how to act. Your present income shall be punctually paid, and when I leave England, as I am about to do, you will be released from the restrictions you are now under, and may see what friends you please. A compliance with my orders will

will oblige me, and perhaps hereafter greatly benefit yourself.

WILLIAM MENVILLE.

Well, my dear Mrs. Colemore, you have now perused the letter, which has almost annihilated me, nevertheless, I have sufficient spirits left in such a cause, to do myself justice, and after mature deliberation, the following is a copy of my answer.

TO W. MENVILLE, ESQ.

Sir,

To complain or recriminate, would be entirely useless now, when you have pre-judged me, and impute to me consequences my own heart acquits me of being answerable for. I shall therefore make no protestations of affection, which meets no credit from you, but leave to heaven and your own conscience, the vindication and justice I know myself entitled

titled to expect. The contents of your letter, sir, I answer as a mother (who is no longer considered as a wife) ought to do. There is every probability to believe *I* may never be in possession of the settlement you so generously, at the time, and voluntarily thought proper to secure for me; very far from me is the wish to profit by it; but, sir, *I* have a daughter, you seem to have forgot that she is your's also; have I a right to give away the property of my children? surely not; what is really and truly mine, I can and will dispose of at your pleasure. The annual allowance I now receive, I willingly resign, and will make it over as your solicitor shall direct; I will trust to providence and my own industry for the support of myself and child, nor ever tax your justice to give us a single shilling; this is all I can or will agree to; I never will give up my settlement, which may benefit my family hereafter; I *must*, I *will* be a mother. I can submit to poverty myself, but I will guard against it for those I leave behind me. Be assured, sir, there is nothing

nothing respecting myself only, which I would not do, to convince you of my affection; but there are more relative obligations than one, and it will be my only consolation in the hour of death to reflect, that I have strictly endeavoured to perform my duty in every situation; and if I err, the error is in judgment, and not from the heart.

I am, sir,

your truly affectionate,

and faithful wife,

EMILY MENVILLE.

When I write with courage, and revolt against oppression, I know I may expect your approbation; 'tis a painful task to be compelled thus to refuse a husband's wishes, but when I consider that he would wrong his child to procure the means of gratification for a worthless woman, surely I am justified in

in my denial. How his affairs can be so deranged, I cannot think. We doubtless lived at a great expence, but I was always told much below his fortune; besides the time was so short, it was impossible he could receive any material hurt from it. I never understood Mr. Menville had the least propensity to gaming, and was the whole ten thousand pounds awarded against him for damages on Mrs. Thurkill's account, I should not suppose there could be any necessity for selling or mortgaging estates to pay it. In short, I am bewildered in my conjectures, and extremely apprehensive what is to be my fate, and my poor Emily's. Ah, my dear Mrs. Colemore, I fear the stings of poverty only on her account, yet she wants but little now, and I must accustom her to curb her inclinations hereafter. Don't you think it very extraordinary, neither my brother nor uncle have deigned to make any enquiries after me; they must have seen the papers, and to be so entirely unconcerned about a relation so near to them, is such a proof

proof of apathy and indifference, as severely wounds me. Oh! that uncle! he, at least, ought to shew me attention, or I had not been what I am; forgive this last expression, which the bitterness of sorrow has wrung from me; I will be patient, and bear my affliction without reproaching others. I have impatiently expected to hear from you, these three days past; I hope your letters have not miscarried, yet this is such a retired and remote place, I have a thousand fears about them. —I was interrupted by the entrance of Ann. I should be glad, madam, if you could get another maid to attend Miss Emily, as I design going back to London next Monday.

You surprise me, Ann, “what is the meaning you leave me so abruptly?”

“Because I don’t like this dismal place, and I hear my master is going out of England, and then I suppose I shall never be paid my agreement.”

“I shall

"I shall take care to pay your wages whilst you remain with me, but however, I don't press you to stay."

"Yes, madam, but I never should have come so far from home, but master promised me twenty pounds a year above my wages, to be with you, and let him know how things went on."

I was astonished at this instance of meanness, but said,

"Have you heard lately from Mr. Men-ville, then?"

"No, but I had a letter yesterday from our cook, and she says master is going over to live with the French, so where will my twenty pounds be then? and I am sure 'tis like being buried alive to remain here."

"Very well, Ann, you may go when you please."

"On

“ On Monday, ma’am, I have bespoke a place in the machine that goes from Penzance.”

“ That’s the next town, is it not ?”

“ Yes, ma’am, five miles off, Mr. Bailey says, and is gone to take a seat for me this morning.”

“ Very well, I have no objection.” She then withdrew. How mean of Mr. Menville to employ this girl as a spy on my conduct. I am sick of myself and the world ; but here comes my sweet child to reprove me, I will take a walk with her to calm my mind. My dear Mrs. Colemore, heaven has sent me a friend, but who, or what he is, I know not, nor how I came to be known. I quitted my pen to take a walk on the terrace, my child in my arms ; the evening was fine, I took two or three turns ; a decent farmer-like looking man passed and bowed ; the next turn I stopt, and looking at the sea,

was for a moment lost in thought; the same man again approached the walls, and quickly throwing over a piece of paper, which fell heavy, was out of sight in a moment. Very much surprised, I took up the parcel, a large pebble was under the cover, and a letter directed to Mrs. Menville, in a hand I never saw; I sat down, my child on my lap, and hastily tore it open; these were the contents.

Madam,

Be not alarmed, a friend to virtue and to you, its charming representative, wishes to have the power of serving you. He is no stranger to your unmerited ill-treatment, and the confinement you suffer. His abilities are equal to his wishes, and you may, if you please, soon be released from this place, and placed in the bosom of your friends at Sudbury, join Mrs. Bertie at Spa, or settle wherever you like. The person who writes, is wholly disinterested, but in his desire of making you happy in your own way. He will be near this wall both mornings and evenings, until
he

he is fortunate enough to receive your commands.

A Friend.

This note, my dear friend, has alarmed me; who is there that can have interest enough in my affairs, to hold forth assistance, or can have obtained a knowledge of my situation. My uncle or brother would have interfered openly; Mr. Colemore, I am sure, would not be secret to me; who then *can it be*? but no matter, I never will accept the favours of any man—probably I shall soon be free to act as I please. However, I have written the following answer.

Mrs. Menville feels herself very particularly obliged to the stranger, who so kindly wishes to serve her, but begs to assure him, she is happily in no need of assistance. Her residence in this castle will in all probability be very short, but should it be otherwise, she has nothing to complain of, and consequently has no services to require from a disinterested friend.

This

This note I shall watch an opportunity to throw over the wall, after which I must discontinue my walks on the terrace; for although I am not sorry to find I have a friend near me, yet for worlds I would not be seen to hold converse with any man, nor can I reconcile to myself holding any clandestine correspondence. My situation is so peculiarly delicate, that the slightest breath of slander might irreparably injure me; it behoves me therefore to be extremely cautious. I shall hourly now expect to hear from Mr. Menville, whose displeasure I must expect, and of course must arm myself to bear reproaches, and perhaps suffer great indignities; but I will acquire fortitude to bear every evil I am not conscious of deserving. Write, pray write, my dear Mrs. Colemore, wherever I am, whatever is my destiny, you shall be informed of it, for I am ever

your affectionate and obliged,

EMILY MENVILLE.

END OF VOL. II.



ro
f-
l-
d
en
I
ne
t-
of
s-
s.
r.
t-
-
;
il
y
I